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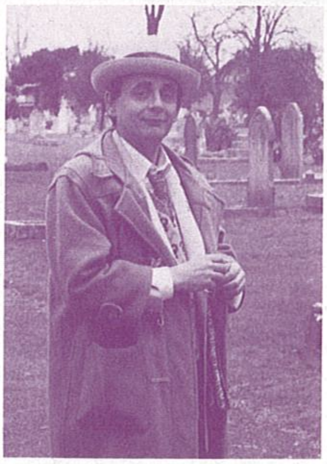
53 APRIL '88



RATINGS EXCLUSIVE

THIS ISSUE D.W.B. documents the officially recognised ratings of the Hartnell era, and subsequent issues will feature the complete audience figures for every Doctor to date providing a comprehensive guide to the series' ratings for the first time.

This has been achieved thanks to the painstaking work of Gordon McAllister who has spent many months carefully compiling the data with the help of the BBC Audience Research Department at Wood Lane and the BBC's written archive in Caversham, Reading. This is because the official figures used today are compiled by BARB (the British Audience Research Bureau) who have only been in existence in recent years (ie Davison, Colin Baker and McCoy) and before then the BBC researched their own figures which, like BARB, were the most respected and accurate measure of ratings of their day.

Therefore our guide to DOCTOR WHO's ratings through the years are based on the definitive figures published at any time over the last twenty-five years, as opposed to those compiled by other market research agencies such as MRIB or Jictar who use(d) far smaller samples per head of the population to gauge their subsequently less conclusive statistics. (These were the same figures the Did You See...? team referred to when researching each of the Doctor's average audience figure).

The publication of these official figures will shatter many myths that have built up over the years due to their previous unavailability. For example this issue it destroys the age-old misconception that THE GUNFIGHTERS is the lowest-rated DOCTOR WHO story of all time while future instalments will reveal that the classic Troughton stories didn't necessarily achieve the highest ratings, nor were THE ARK IN SPACE episode two or THE DEADLY ASSASSIN the highest-ever rated episode / story...

TURN TO PAGE SIX...

Tom Baker interviewed

THE PHOTOGRAPHS NATHAN-TURNER DEFIED US TO PUBLISH... CENTRE PAGES

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An exclusive interview conducted while Tom Baker was recently playing Sherlock Holmes in Dublin in the Hugh Leonard play Mask of Moriarty. As you will see, Tom is sadly becoming ever more of a recluse and very distant from his memories as DOCTOR WHO, as exemplified by this rare interview conducted while Tom Baker was on a publicity tour of Australia in 1979. This eye-opening interview was conducted by Anthony Howe and originally appeared in the Tom Baker In Australia special issue of Zerinza in April 1979 (reproduced with permission).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Sophie Aldred, Tom Baker, B.B.C. Audience Research Department, B.B.C. Written Archives Centre, J.Jeremy Bentham, Daragh Carville, Sheldon Collins, Robert Cope, Ian Fraser, Greenwich Theatre, Colin Hackett, Peter Halliday, Anthony Howe, Rosemary Howe, Gordon McAllister, Sylvester McCoy, Alan Millar, Andrew Morgan, Newpalm Productions, Alister Pearson, Gary Russell, George Sewell, Jo Thurn, Kathleen Toth, Simon Williams.

D.W.B. AD RATES: See this column last issue for fan and commercial rates, sizes and conditions. (Please note that next issue is another specialist issue - see below - which will incorporate an 8-page D.W.B. section. Space is therefore strictly limited and will be issued on a first come first served basis or forwarded on to June's D.W.B.#55 issue).

NEXT ISSUE: After the success of last year's Roger Delgado Tribute, D.W.B. is releasing another specialized publication next month consisting of 40 pages plus an 8-page D.W.B.#54 pullout supplement featuring all the latest news, Troughton's ratings and an exclusive interview with DOCTOR WHO's most durable production member, Val McCrimmon, who first worked as an A.F.M. on THE SENSORITES and is currently involved on the new Dalek story. The content of the special issue will be revealed on publication - look out for next issue which will have a full-colour art cover by Tony Clark based on THE POWER OF THE DALEKS (don't forget because the D.W.B. logo won't be on the front cover !) and out in mid-May...

TO ORDER next issue send a crossed cheque / P.O. for £2 95 ($6 50) payable to D.W.B. and send to the above address.
SUBSCRIPTIONS from next issue up to the Winter Special are £15 (U.S.: $35).

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SEASON 25 HOTS UP!

PLEASE NOTE: Although this article doesn't contain detailed plot information, it may feature material some readers will not wish to know.

REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS

Filming started on Easter Monday by the river Thames and The Sun and Today newspapers reported of terrified local residents being scared by the loud bangs caused by exploding Daleks - with one bang being just a little too loud for comfort and even taking the special effects technicians by surprise ! Other locations over the 9-day shoot included an English pub (?), a warehouse (surprise !) and a school in Hammersmith to which the press were invited on 12th April. The Sun, The Star and The Daily Express covered the return of the Daleks in the following day's editions complete with yet more stories of the series being saved etc. (SEE 'DAILY EXPRESS' ARTICLE, RIGHT)

This location of course represents Coal Hill School in which a Dalek spaceship has landed (literally !) shortly after the sudden departure of The first Doctor and ex-pupil Susan Foreman. The Totters Lane junkyard also puts in a reappearance though thankfully not the same version as seen in ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN. This time the designers have actually gone to the trouble of recreating the sets exactly as they looked 25 years ago and to Barry Newbery(the original designer)'s floor plans ! The gates to the junkyard were shot on location in Suffolk originally with 'I.W.Foreman' inscribed on to them until a sharp-eyed senior member of the prod' team spotted this potentially embarrassing error and the 'W' was subsequently changed to an 'M' !

Last issue we hinted at multi-coloured Daleks. Well, we must confess that our mole in fact spotted the half-made Daleks in the BBC Visual Effects Workshop with their primer coats on awaiting their proper livery. Therefore we are relieved to report that the 16 Daleks newly built for this adventure - the most, incidentally, that have ever graced a DOCTOR WHO story - come in the usual shades of cream and gold, dull grey and black (on second thoughts...). Also the Dalek Emperor won't now be appearing as the TV21 golden version due to the expense involved in constructing a perspex globe to house his brain sphere - all of £2,000 !

Purists will be pleased to note that John Scott Martin maintains his record as having played a Dalek against all seven Doctors - even though his Dalek does tend to trundle about at ¼ of a mile per hour these days - and it will be interesting to see whether Roy Skelton will be providing the Dalek voices thus maintaining his similar record of having been credited alongside all the Doctors... John (K9) Leeson will be playing Davros in the brief scenes in which he appears, and other cast members include - and a cracking one they are too - Pamela(ROBOTS OF DEATH)Salem as Rachel, Michael(PYRAMIDS OF MARS, THE INVISIBLE ENEMY to name just two)Sheard as the Headmaster of Coal Hill (a step up from an ordinary teacher in Grange Hill !), George(UFO)Sewell as Ratcliffe, Simon(Upstairs Downstairs)as Gilmore and Peter Halliday as the Vicar.

THE GREATEST SHOW IN THE GALAXY

Steven Wyatt's second DOCTOR WHO story is the only script this season not to feature an old foe, although it does see the return of Stratford(FOUR TO DOOMSDAY)Johns who plays the Ringmaster of an intergactic touring circus whose exhibits should currently be keeping the Visual Effects Department very busy...

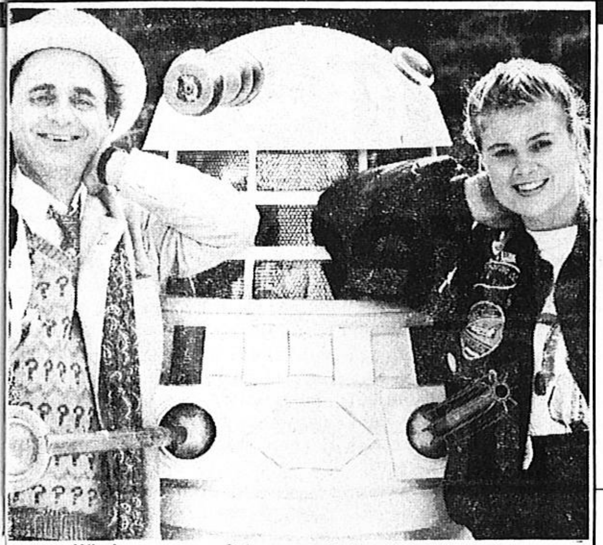
MALOPATH

Written by newcomer Graham Curry, it is not yet known whether Anthony Ainley will be recreating the role of the Master. To overcome a visual problem posed by the script, parts of episode two will contain animated sequences believed to be similar in realisation to the computer-animated sequence seen at the start of Season 24 and on to which Sylvester McCoy will be CSO'd.

NEMESIS

John Nathan-Turner's final story is currently being unofficially billed as the anniversary story. As you will probably have guessed by now this is the story in which the Cybermen return, again by a newcomer called Kevin Clarke. In addition we can reveal that two past companions will also be appearing, namely the Brigadier and Tegan, alias Nicholas Courtney and Janet Fielding helping to see JN-T out with a bang !

Script editor Andrew Cartmel, however, is reportedly "very unhappy" at Nathan-Turner's insistence of the inclusion of so many old monsters and characters this season.



Who's company: Sylvester with Sophie and a Dalek

Who's dunit! Doctor and Daleks win TV reprieve

By NEIL CLEMENTS

DOCTOR WHO has defeated his greatest enemy—former BBC1 chief Michael Grade.

The venerable time lord has been reprieved after being threatened with the axe by Mr Grade, who is now head of Channel Four.

And when he returns to BBC screens in the autumn, Doctor Who will take on his other deadly foe—the Daleks.

Mr Grade had threatened to scrap the long-running science-fiction series, claiming it was too violent and lacking in humour.

But the new controller of BBC1, Jonathan Powell, is a fan of the programme. And he has said: "Carry on, Doctor."

Actor Sylvester McCoy, who plays Doctor Who, will get a new assistant, Ace played by actress Sophie Aldred.

NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF

SEASON 25 will almost certainly be transmitted once again on Monday evenings and could end up in the 7 o'clock slot if Wogan gets the chop.

BBC VIDEO are to release at least one and possibly more DOCTOR WHO tapes by the end of the year. Stories currently being negotiated are ARK IN SPACE, DEADLY ASSASSIN and THE TIME WARRIOR - all Robert Holmes 4-parters !

COAST TO COAST are expected to name the actor who will be playing the screen Doctor within the next month so keep an eye on the newspapers...

JON PERTWEE is shortly to be interviewed by D.W.B.. If you have a question you wish to put to him please send it to the editorial address.

THE IN-VISION GENESIS OF THE DALEKS release has been delayed one month till May in order to incorporate an interview with David Maloney currently being conducted.

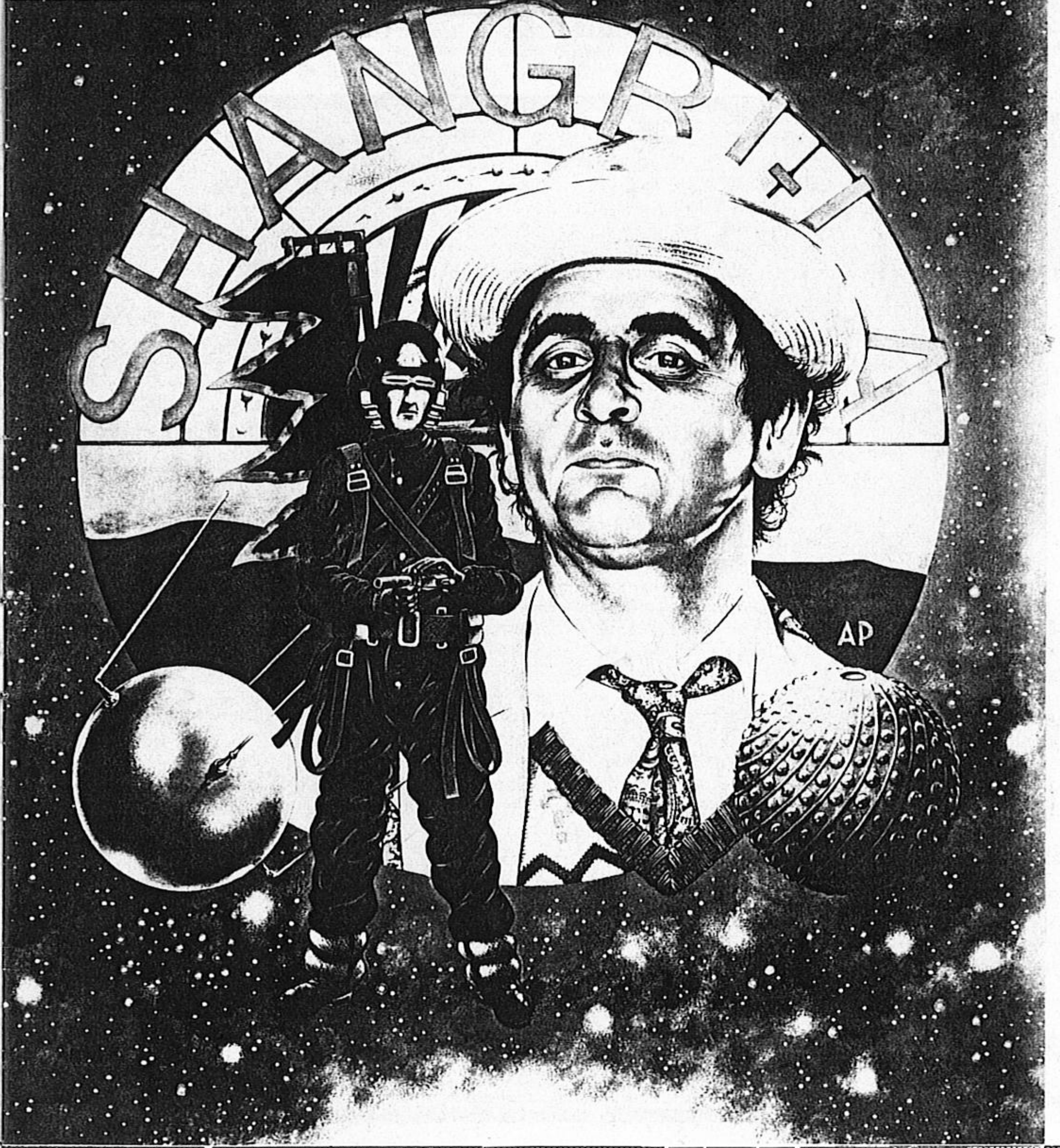
DUE TO LACK OF SPACE this issue we have had to delay news of our discovery of offscreen stills from a missing story until next issue. Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

'THE CHASE' ALL SET TO BE NOVELISED

Last issue we featured news about Terry Nation's new book about the Daleks due to be published in the States by a U.S. publisher in November and in Britain by W.H. Allen next March. The author John Peel has apparently gotten on so well with the Dalek 'creator' that he has persuaded Nation to allow him to novelise the Hartnell 6-parter THE CHASE which will subsequently be published in a similar fashion with W.H.Allen securing UK publishing rights. Many of the Dalek stories have been awaiting novelisation for years and although he didn't want to write them himself, up to now Nation has been reluctant to allow anyone else tackle his two remaining unnovelised adventures. He also opposed plans to novelise the two Troughton/Dalek stories because he always felt that David Whitaker's general ideas of the Daleks conflicted with his own and, quite frankly he wasn't at all happy with the recent Saward/Dalek adventures. The Roger Hancock Organisation pending, if all goes well Peel hopes to follow THE CHASE with a novelisation of THE DALEKS' MASTER PLAN in two volumes.

Back home now and Jo Thurn informs us of a new series of books titled DOCTOR WHO Classics coming out later in the year. Basically they are two books in one bound in attractive silver jackets featuring the original cover paintings. Retailing at £2 95 (paperback only), August sees the release of THE MYTH MAKERS/THE GUNFIGHTERS and DALEK INVASION OF EARTH/THE CRUSADERS while September features THE KROTONS/SEEDS OF DEATH.

A major change is to take place concerning the method in which the novels are published. W.H.Allen have decided that from December paperbacks and hardbacks will be released simultaneously. This might sound like good news but unfortunately it will mean that after the publication of THE SMUGGLERS hardback in June, no new novel will appear until the paperbacks have caught up in December with the hardback/paperback release of PARADISE TOWERS. Subsequently BANNERMEN will be out in January, WAR MACHINES in February, DRAGONFIRE in March, ATTACK in April '89 and NIGHTMARE FAIR in May '89. Meanwhile Peter Haining's DOCTOR WHO - 25 GLorious Years will be out in September.



(Thanks to Alister Pearson for this copy of his BANNERMEN artwork).

A Letter from America

A RELATIVELY LONG PERIOD without any major DOCTOR WHO conventions in the U.S.A. has been redressed by the well-received Time Loop convention in Kansas City in March featuring Debbie Watling, John Levene, Anthony Ainley and Mark Strickson. Apart from the Time Festival in July (see ad in D.W.B.#50), at the moment there really doesn't seem to be any other major purely DOCTOR WHO convention planned for the States in the remainder of the year although Canada is staging a convention also in July.

Meanwhile Anthony Ainley and Colin Baker are making several appearances at the steady stream of science fiction conventions that incorporate guests from general sci-fi favourites including Star Trek (old and new) and Blakes 7. There is also a fairly active circuit of Blakes 7 conventions, nearly always featuring Paul Darrow and/or Michael Keating. They are competing to see who can set foot in the most states (Keating leads !). There is, however, something of a debate in DOCTOR WHO fan circles concerning this cross-fertilisation of interests: Timecon in California has done this for several years and Tardiscon in Saint Louis has moved to include Blakes 7, but other organisations are opposed to this development.

* * * * * * * * * * *

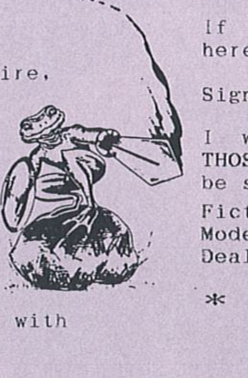
The future of DOCTOR WHO fandom here should be greatly affected by B.B.C. Lionheart's plan to launch a new American fan club. Lionheart - the B.B.C.-owned distributor of DOCTOR WHO and other Beeb shows in America - has been testing the waters to determine if there is sufficient interest in having a "Friends of DOCTOR WHO" fan club that would cost $5 a year and publish a quarterly newsletter of 'official' news and interviews. If that format sounds strangely familiar, this has been widely interpreted as putting the coup de grace to Ron Katz's long-running DOCTOR WHO Fan Club of America, which has of late become distanced from Lionheart and from the working relationship that it had enjoyed with P.B.S. fund-raising activities. D.W.F.C.A. has rallied to the extent of publishing its first newsletter...in nearly a year ! Not surprisingly it blasts Lionheart, but also announces that the D.W.F.C.A. newsletter (The Whovian Times) will henceforth appear twice a year instead of quarterly - a publication schedule that has not been met for several years anyway ! Latest word is that Lionheart has gotten the goahead for their club.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Lionheart also has been saying for some time that there will be some sort of convention tour to mark the 25th anniversary of DOCTOR WHO this year. Details are non-existent at this point but the tour will be run by Brian Sloman, he who was responsible for the B.B.C. Truck Tour (they don't like to hear it referred to as such, but that is what we all called it !), and who is also in charge of the fan club. For now it appears that the tour will consist of 18 two-day conventions to be held in areas where the truck tour drew most attendees. It seems unlikely to start any earlier than July or August, and it is doubtful that any guests will be confirmed until much later, but it will be interesting to see who will be available. Several DOCTOR WHO actors have reportedly gotten an American agent specifically to book convention work for them while several others are supposedly "burnt out" on U.S. cons.

I'll bring you any developments on these items as and when in future columns - KATHLEEN TOTH

-ADVERTISEMENT-



TWILIGHT'88

CALLING ALL DOCTOR WHO AND BLAKES SEVEN FANS!!

Would you like to meet:-

FRAZER HINES, JAN CHAPPELL, COLIN BAKER, SALLY KNYVETT, DEBORAH WATLING, NICK COURTNEY.

BUT HOW?

It's simple. You attend Twilight '88, on Saturday 1st & Sunday 2nd October 1988.

WHERE?

The Eastleigh Hotel, Eastleigh, Hampshire, which is near Southampton.

HOW MUCH?

£18 Both days
£9 one day
£4 Supporting

WHO DO I CONTACT?

Fill in the registration form, send it with your registration fee to:-

'TWILIGHT '88', 48 Lensbury Way, Thamesmead,
London, S.E.2 9.S.Z.

N.B. All guests attending work permitting

REGISTRATION FORM

FULL NAME:-..................................

I.D. ON BADGE:-..............................

ADDRESS:-....................................

....

Tel; No; HOME/WORK:-.........................

Please register me for FULL/ SATURDAY/ SUNDAY/ SUPPORTING. I enclose a cheque/postal order for £........ made payable to 'TWILIGHT'.

Please put the full names and addresses of any other person(s) you are registering for.

If you would like to be a steward, please sign here for details:-

Signature:-..................................

I would like details on the following (DELETE THOSE NOT REQUIRED). Accommodation details will be sent automaticaly.

Fiction & Poetry comp/ Costume Parade/ Auction/ Model Comp/ Art & Craft comp/ Filk song & Drama/ Dealers Tables/ Advertising.

* Please send 4 A4 STAMPED S.A.E.'s with this form for registration confirmation and progress reports.

"I AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE CONVENTION AND UNDERTAKE TO SETTLE ANY BILLS INCURRED BY MYSELF RELATING TO TWILIGHT '88"

Signature...................... Date....................

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE ?

DANIEL BLYTHE, Smarden, KENT

Congratulations on another excellent issue: NO MORE JN-T - if I could afford it I'd have opened a bottle of champagne ! I just hope you don't have to print another "I have been persuaded to stay" article. It all seems too good to be true, especially as I got my copy on April 1st !!

I agree with your correspondent who said that much of JN-T's pre-1986 DOCTOR WHO was excellent, although you yourself do hint that this was more by luck than judgement and I couldn't agree more. If JN-T happened to hire a good director and/or writer the result was usually pleasing - if only he had continued to employ Graeme Harper, Chris Bidmead, Steve Gallagher... - and ignored the rubbish !

I hope that the new producer, whoever he - or she - may be, not only reverses this trend by hiring experienced, quality writers, directors and actors, but gradually destroys all the JN-T motifs. He could start with the dreadful logo and the even more dreadful wink, and then it would be nice to have the old theme tune arrangement back. Then, perhaps, somehow in his first story the Doctor could contrive to lose that awful jumper (shove it into a Cyberman's chest unit, or something) and be forced to create a scientific 'lash-up' necessitating the sacrifice of that appalling umbrella. Oh, and then we could go back to Gallifrey to establish that the Inquisitor and all the other recently-seen Time Lords have been assassinated by the Master, who was himself unfortunately killed afterwards by a vengeful Gallifreyan guard ? After that we could maybe have the Cybermen re-established as a credible force, and bring back the Rani, Glitz and Mel for one episode to have them tortured horribly to death by Davros who commits suicide afterwards. It would give a catharsis, helping to conclude the fans' Pyrrhic victory, and wouldn't be any stranger than much of what we've seen over the last two years !

BEYOND REPAIR

JON BOLTON, Tendring, ESSEX

I was greatly relieved to see that JN-T is leaving - I just hope this is not an April Fool. He has done far more damage in the last two years than all the good in the years he took over, but I feel that the damage is beyond repair. The new producer will have one hell of a job getting four million viewers back to the programme. I just hope he/she is given at least a couple of seasons to prove him/herself.

TIME TO CELEBRATE ?

MARK SAUNDERS, Poole, DORSET

I had to write, the news is so good ! I look forward to hearing who will take over. As long as it's someone with a good record of producing solid drama then I don't care who it is. I think it's time to celebrate, after all, eight other producers (I include Graham Williams) managed to give us a good, dramatic programme (even JN-T at the beginning) and I can see no reason why a new broom shouldn't sweep clean !

I also look forward to Sly McCoy under a different producer and a fresh approach. I don't like his Doctor yet, but I'm hopeful as he definitely got better throughout Season 24 to produce an average performance at the end. And even Season 25 looks rosy; when people leave a job after a long time they tend to try to go out on a high...

EDITOR: As the above examples show, the news of Nathan-Turner at last leaving has been met with universal relief and delight, and no, this wasn't an April Fool's joke - just an unfortunate coinciding of dates !

CORPORATION TOWERS

MICHAEL SEELY, Norwich, NORFOLK

You have actually generated a response from that bastion of worldwide excellence and integrity, the B.B.C.(D.W.B.#51). Such a shame that the response is a negative one.

What has happened to my favourite TV series which, to me, is more than just a juvenile fad ? What is all this talk of solicitors, censorship of criticisms, national newspaper campaigns to oust the producer, threats to silence the fans and deliberate self-destruction ? Is this really DOCTOR WHO ? Can it really be that fanzines no longer talk about what a great episode it was on Saturday ?

It is no longer a joy to be a fan of the present day series. Okay, so it is fun to meet fellow fans who live in the district or at school or at work who love to talk about their favourite memories of the Tom Baker or Jon Pertwee days, or even as far backas THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH as my dad can ! Now, that was a good story... But when I look at the cover of D.W.B.#51 to find solicitors are actually trying to get you to back down or quieten down (so as to safe their face) I wonder why I bother being a fan ?

It is equally saddening, not to mention eye-opening, to read damning reviews of the series in the extremely conservative DWM ! (Yes, I actually buy the thing unlike Mr.Fitzgerald, although after the cover to #133 who can blame him for even being seen in the same shop as it is - what are they trying to do, destroy their sales figures ?!).

DOCTOR WHO is almost beyond saving. Once the series had fine producers who didn't need to be told of their mistakes as they could see them and try to correct them or leave before it got worse (ie John Wiles, Graham Williams). Once you could criticise it without fear of censorship restrictions on programmes the equivalent of Open Air or have unbiased Did You See...? reports. Fans didn't need to launch campaigns like Operation WHO !

It is heartbreaking and a reflection of the B.B.C. today to see what is happening to DOCTOR WHO: A producer who is totally useless but for three seasons wouldn't - or couldn't - be moved, controllers who blindly praise because they can't be seen to have blundered (I mean, could Powell and Grade really have blasted JN-T, McCoy and Season 24's ratings as they employ him, sacked Colin and had a hand in McCoy's casting and moved the series opposite Coronation Street), and it goes on...

Come to think of it, all this decay, corruption and stupidity would make an excellent DOCTOR WHO satire all on its own ! We can call it Corporation Towers and have Kenneth Williams as Michael Grade who defects to another planet when the pressure gets too great, Nigel Hawthorne as Jonathan Powell who is really a renegade Time Lord bent on destroying the Doctor from inside and Wayne Sleep as the Doctor.

Ooh ! Who shall we have to play JN-T...?!

CRITICISM RICHLY DESERVED

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN, Sheffield, S.YORKS

As for that letter from the B.B.C. legal department, I have already written to Mr.Williams - using quotations from WHO luminaries of the past and even present - to back everything Ian Levine said. I can only hope that neither you nor Ian suffer because of the B.B.C.'s pathetic attempt to protect that talentless wally from the criticism he so richly deserves.

CT COVER-UP ?

NICK COOPER, Leeds, WEST YORKSHIRE

My concern is that a very large proportion of DOCTOR WHO fandom in the U.K. is being deliberately kept in ignorance of recent events. All the 'news' in recent CTs seems designed to bolster up the lie that everything is hunky-dory and that there is nothing to worry about. While D.W.B. highlights Open Air and Did You See...?, CT indulges in over-enthusiastic reporting of the SuperChannel screenings (which can't really be seen by more than 5% of the D.W.A.S. anyway) and trying to convince D.W.A.S. members that the ratings aren't as bad as they obviously are. Whatever the views of certain members of the executive, those responsible for the newsletter haven't the guts enough to report the truth and I'm sure it will come as a real and unexpected shock to their members if and when the series does go down the plughole. Perhaps it is time for them to tell the B.B.C. where they can stick their "official approval" and go it alone. In light of the recent "biting the hand that feeds them" comment, it appears that the B.B.C. regards the D.W.A.S. as a bunch of children who should do as they're told or else keep their damned mouths shut if they think they have any grounds to complain.

EDITOR: Since sending our reply (cover of D.W.B.#51) we have heard nothing more from the B.B.C.'s legal department.

CAMPAIGN FOR REPEATS

DALLAS JONES, Sydney, AUSTRALIA

A suggestion to show the B.B.C. and the general public that fans want the show to continue is to campaign for some sort of recognition by the B.B.C. of the 25th anniversary. So far, I gather, there will be nothing, except for the appearance of the Daleks next season. No Longleat celebration, no documentary (although Lionheart are promising U.S. fans a documentary and a tour this year), no film now that has been delayed, and NO repeats. We in Australia are fortunate to have seen a lot of repeats over the years, and fans in the U.S. even more. It is time that British fans did something positive, and the period leading up to the 25th anniversary would be the best time to campaign. With the return of the Daleks and the merchandise spin-offs they look set to generate, then the repeat of at least THE DALEKS would seem appropriate, preferably screened at the same time of day on a Saturday when it was originally shown, beginning in December to cap off this anniversary year. A campaign for this would show that the fans are still interested in the show and it could be picked up in the press if it is pointed out that the B.B.C. are doing nothing to celebrate the 25th anniversary. It was suggested that a demonstration outside the B.B.C. be mounted for Operation WHO. I suggest that a demonstration should go ahead anyway to get the B.B.C. to properly celebrate the 25th anniversary of their longest-running series.

EDITOR: What do you think ? Are the B.B.C. deliberately giving DOCTOR WHO the cold-shoulder this anniversary year, and if so what can be done to rectify the situation ?

Australian readers are reminded that Dallas (president of the Australasian DOCTOR WHO Fan Club) is the official Australian distributor of D.W.B. and subscriptions and back issues can be ordered directly from him at: P.O. Box 148, Gladesville 2111, N.S.W. Australia. Dallas will be visiting the U.K. this summer (early July-September) and would be grateful to hear from anyone in the following areas who would be willing to accommodate him for a few days: London, Liverpool, Wales, Edinburgh and Bath (write to above address).

RANI MEEETS THE REAL MASTER

CHRIS KRISOCKI, New Jersey, U.S.A.

Having seen TIME AND THE RANI twice in one week on two different P.B.S. stations I still can't stand it. I thought McCoy looked fine in his Napoleonic costume but what a pity he has to shout at us through that horrid sweater. And JNT calls his spoon-playing and pratfalls "acting talents" which he "hopes to expand". Oh, oh...

I started to watch an episode of The Avengers called Stay Tuned recently. In it were Roger Delgado who played, coincidentally, a master hypnotist, and Kate O'Mara who was an accomplice ...talk about coincidences !!

EDITOR: Due to a feature-packed issue, this month's letters column has been curtailed.

THE COMPLETE HARTNELL RATINGS

SEASON 1

	(DATE OF TRANSMISSION)	(VIEWERS IN MILLIONS)	(POSITION IN COMPARISON TO OTHER PROGRAMMES)	(AUDIENCE APPRECIATE AS A %AGE)
THE TRIBE OF GUM(1)	23-11-63	4.4	114	63
THE TRIBE OF GUM(2)	30-11-63	5.9	85	59
THE TRIBE OF GUM(3)	07-12-63	6.9	61	65
THE TRIBE OF GUM(4)	14-12-63	6.4	70	55
THE DALEKS(1)	21-12-63	6.9	67	59
THE DALEKS(2)	28-12-63	6.4	78	58
THE DALEKS(3)	04-01-64	8.9	45	63
THE DALEKS(4)	11-01-64	9.9	29	63
THE DALEKS(5)	18-01-64	9.9	27	63
THE DALEKS(6)	25-01-64	10.4	29	63
THE DALEKS(7)	01-02-64	10.4	25	65
BEYOND THE SUN(1)	08-02-64	10.4	21	61
BEYOND THE SUN(2)	15-02-64	9.9	31	60
MARCO POLO(1)	22-02-64	9.4	33	63
MARCO POLO(2)	29-02-64	9.4	33	63
MARCO POLO(3)	07-03-64	9.4	34	62
MARCO POLO(4)	14-03-64	9.9	31	60
MARCO POLO(5)	21-03-64	9.4	37	59
MARCO POLO(6)	28-03-64	8.4	49	59
MARCO POLO(7)	04-04-64	10.4	22	59
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(1)	11-04-64	9.9	22	62
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(2)	18-04-64	9.4	25	60
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(3)	25-04-64	9.9	22	61
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(4)	02-05-64	10.4	20	60
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(5)	09-05-64	7.9	29	61
THE KEYS OF MARINUS(6)	16-05-64	6.9	43	63
THE AZTECS(1)	23-05-64	7.4	25	62
THE AZTECS(2)	30-05-64	7.4	34	62
THE AZTECS(3)	06-06-64	7.9	19	57
THE AZTECS(4)	13-06-64	7.4	34	58
THE SENSORITES(1)	20-06-64	7.9	17	59
THE SENSORITES(2)	27-06-64	6.9	39	59
	04-07-64			
THE SENSORITES(3)	11-07-64	7.4	22	56
THE SENSORITES(4)	18-07-64	5.5	58	60
THE SENSORITES(5)	25-07-64	6.9	29	57
THE SENSORITES(6)	01-08-64	6.9	39	57
THE REIGN OF TERROR(1)	08-08-64	6.9	37	58
THE REIGN OF TERROR(2)	15-08-64	6.9	35	54
THE REIGN OF TERROR(3)	22-08-64	6.9	34	55
THE REIGN OF TERROR(4)	29-08-64	6.4	36	53
THE REIGN OF TERROR(5)	05-09-64	6.9	39	53
THE REIGN OF TERROR(6)	12-09-64	6.4	38	55

SEASON 2

	(DATE OF TRANSMISSION)	(VIEWERS IN MILLIONS)	(POSITION IN COMPARISON TO OTHER PROGRAMMES)	(AUDIENCE APPRECIATE AS A %AGE)
PLANET OF GIANTS(1)	31-10-64	8.4	37	57
PLANET OF GIANTS(2)	07-11-64	8.4	45	58
PLANET OF GIANTS(3)	14-11-64	8.9	33	59
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(1)	21-11-64	11.4	12	63
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(2)	28-11-64	12.4	10	59
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(3)	05-12-64	11.9	10	59
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(4)	12-12-64	11.9	11	59
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(5)	19-12-64	11.4	18	58
DALEK INVASION'EARTH(6)	26-12-64	12.4	12	63
THE RESCUE(1)	02-01-65	12.0	11	57
THE RESCUE(2)	09-01-65	13.0	8	59
THE ROMANS(1)	16-01-65	13.0	7	53
THE ROMANS(2)	23-01-65	11.5	15	51
THE ROMANS(3)	30-01-65	10.0	28	50
THE ROMANS(4)	06-02-65	12.0	13	50
THE WEB PLANET(1)	13-02-65	13.5	7	56
THE WEB PLANET(2)	20-02-65	12.5	12	53
THE WEB PLANET(3)	27-02-65	12.5	11	53
THE WEB PLANET(4)	06-03-65	13.0	9	49
THE WEB PLANET(5)	13-03-65	12.0	12	48
THE WEB PLANET(6)	20-03-65	11.5	14	42
THE CRUSADE(1)	27-03-65	10.5	16	51
THE CRUSADE(2)	03-04-65	8.5	29	50
THE CRUSADE(3)	10-04-65	9.0	32	49
THE CRUSADE(4)	17-04-65	9.5	27	48
THE SPACE MUSEUM(1)	24-04-65	10.5	16	61
THE SPACE MUSEUM(2)	01-05-65	Figures not available		
THE SPACE MUSEUM(3)	08-05-65	8.5	22	56
THE SPACE MUSEUM(4)	15-05-65	8.5	27	49
THE CHASE(1)	22-05-65	10.0	14	57
THE CHASE(2)	29-05-65	9.5	12	56
THE CHASE(3)	05-06-65	9.0	12	55
THE CHASE(4)	12-06-65	9.5	8	54
THE CHASE(5)	19-06-65	9.0	11	56
THE CHASE(6)	26-06-65	9.5	7	57
THE TIME MEDDLER(1)	03-07-65	8.9	15	57
THE TIME MEDDLER(2)	10-07-65	8.8	19	49
THE TIME MEDDLER(3)	17-07-65	7.7	28	53
THE TIME MEDDLER(4)	24-07-65	8.3	24	54

SEASON 3

	(DATE OF TRANSMISSION)	(VIEWERS IN MILLIONS)	(POSITION IN COMPARISON TO OTHER PROGRAMMES)	(AUDIENCE APPRECIATE AS A %AGE)
GALAXY FOUR(1)	11-09-65	9.0	23	56
GALAXY FOUR(2)	18-09-65	9.5	22	55
GALAXY FOUR(3)	25-09-65	11.3	13	54
GALAXY FOUR(4)	02-10-65	9.9	20	53
MISSION TO THE UNKNOWN	09-10-65	8.3	37	54
THE MYTH MAKERS(1)	16-10-65	8.3	34	48
THE MYTH MAKERS(2)	23-10-65	8.1	40	51
THE MYTH MAKERS(3)	30-10-65	8.7	33	49
THE MYTH MAKERS(4)	06-11-65	8.3	38	52
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(1)	13-11-65	9.1	35	54
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(2)	20-11-65	9.8	31	52
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(3)	27-11-65	10.3	29	52
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(4)	04-12-65	9.5	34	51
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(5)	11-12-65	9.9	26	53
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(6)	18-12-65	9.1	40	56
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(7)	25-12-65	7.9	71	39
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(8)	01-01-66	9.6	31	49
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(9)	08-01-66	9.2	43	52
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(10)	15-01-66	9.5	37	50
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(11)	22-01-66	9.8	35	49
DALEKS' MASTER PLAN(12)	29-01-66	8.6	39	57
THE MASSACRE(1)	05-02-66	8.0	45	52
THE MASSACRE(2)	12-02-66	6.0	96	52
THE MASSACRE(3)	19-02-66	5.9	92	53
THE MASSACRE(4)	26-02-66	5.8	94	53
THE ARK(1)	05-03-66	5.5	102	55
THE ARK(2)	12-03-66	6.9	70	56
THE ARK(3)	19-03-66	6.2	85	51
THE ARK(4)	26-03-66	7.3	71	50
CELESTIAL TOYMAKER(1)	02-04-66	8.0	44	48
CELESTIAL TOYMAKER(2)	09-04-66	8.0	49	49
CELESTIAL TOYMAKER(3)	16-04-66	9.4	32	44
CELESTIAL TOYMAKER(4)	23-04-66	7.8	36	43
THE GUNFIGHTERS(1)	30-04-66	6.5	50	45
THE GUNFIGHTERS(2)	07-05-66	6.6	45	39
THE GUNFIGHTERS(3)	14-05-66	6.2	51	36
THE GUNFIGHTERS(4)	21-05-66	5.7	60	30
THE SAVAGES(1)	28-05-66	4.8	62	48
THE SAVAGES(2)	04-06-66	5.6	50	49
THE SAVAGES(3)	11-06-66	5.0	66	48
THE SAVAGES(4)	18-06-66	4.5	93	48
THE WAR MACHINES(1)	25-06-66	5.4	71	49
THE WAR MACHINES(2)	02-07-66	4.7	76	45
THE WAR MACHINES(3)	09-07-66	5.3	62	44
THE WAR MACHINES(4)	16-07-66	5.5	67	39

SEASON 4

	(DATE OF TRANSMISSION)	(VIEWERS IN MILLIONS)	(POSITION IN COMPARISON TO OTHER PROGRAMMES)	(AUDIENCE APPRECIATE AS A %AGE)
THE SMUGGLERS(1)	10-09-66	4.3	96	47
THE SMUGGLERS(2)	17-09-66	4.9	77	45
THE SMUGGLERS(3)	24-09-66	4.2	96	43
THE SMUGGLERS(4)	01-10-66	4.5	109	43
THE TENTH PLANET(1)	08-10-66	5.5	77	50
THE TENTH PLANET(2)	15-10-66	6.4	57	48
THE TENTH PLANET(3)	22-10-66	7.6	46	48
THE TENTH PLANET(4)	29-10-66	7.5	48	47

"WHAT WERE YOU DOING THE DAY KENNEDY WAS ASSASSINATED ?", was the question posed in a recent television documentary tracing the work of this much-loved U.S. President whose life was so tragically curtailed on 23rd November 1963. Chances are that 25 minutes of it would not have been spent watching the first episode of a modestly publicised new tea-time serial on BBC1.

Such was the confidence the BBC of the time invested in Sydney Newman's new brainchild that a repeat of The Tribe of Gum the following week - immediately preceding episode two - moderately paid off by pulling in 1½ million more viewers, and by the end of the adventure set on Stone Age Earth the ratings for DOCTOR WHO seemed set to average around 6½ million viewers: possibly enough to sustain it for one series before passing it into the annals of the BBC... And then came the Daleks ! If proof were ever needed that the Daleks saved DOCTOR WHO, then it is here. By episode seven the figures had increased spectacularly to 10½ million, and suddenly everyone seemed to know about DOCTOR WHO ! (Significantly, the much-hailed cliffhanger to episode one - showing Barbara being menaced by 'something' - was not the turning point in DOCTOR WHO's fortunes, rather it was the appearance of the Daleks themselves that boosted public awareness of the show as the sudden rise between episodes two (in which the Daleks were unveiled for the first time) and three show). Although THE DALEKS clearly did put DOCTOR WHO on the map, fortunately the public were quite happy to stay with this fascinating new series - Daleks or no Daleks - as the consistent ratings between December '63 and April '64 demonstrate.

By the early summer of 1964 DOCTOR WHO's audience was beginning to wane slightly, but this can be attributed to the show's Saturday afternoon slot - after all, do you prefer sitting at home at 5 15p.m. on a sunny Saturday afternoon watching television ? - which subsequently results in seasonally lower audiences. (Incidentally, the gap between episodes two and three of THE SENSORITES was due to live coverage of the 1964 Olympic Games). THE REIGN OF TERROR ended the season on a par with the first four episodes, but even so by this time DOCTOR WHO's future seemed guaranteed.

There was no question about the BBC resurrecting the Daleks, and by setting their return in the heart of London was sure to be a ratings winner. Season 2 began well enough with PLANET OF GIANTS, but THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH catapulted DOCTOR WHO into the top ten TV programmes for the first time with an average audience of 12 million - at the same time that the country was gripped with Dalekmania. But DOCTOR WHO was to prove bigger than the Daleks when this figure was surpassed by David Whitaker's 2-part THE RESCUE and the lavish and much-publicised space opera THE WEB PLANET, both gaining average viewing figures of 13 million, a breathtaking figure, especially considering that the population of Britain was smaller than it is today and that television was still regarded somewhat as a luxury item. Even THE ROMANS - the much-maligned historical spoof - wasn't poor enough to deter devoted viewers ! And THE CHASE pulling in 'only' 9½ million viewers on average was a remarkable feat, shown as it was in June, a month when television is traditionally afflicted with dwindling audiences ! Season 2 saw success after success for DOCTOR WHO and it was to be some years before the series would match (and top ?) this peak in popularity. Inevitably, as with all popular on-going television series, the bubble was bound to burst...

A combination of complacency in production and the viewers themselves was arguably to blame for the turbulent set of figures for Season 3. Certainly the season started even more impressively than its predecessor, but the subsequent Daleks failed to sustain enough momentum over 12 weeks to repeat the previous season's success. (The noticeable dip for episode seven - The Feast of Steven - down to 8 million interestingly didn't appear to affect subsequent episodes, but even so it distorted the overall average rating of 9.35 million as opposed to 9½ which THE DALEKS' MASTER PLAN would otherwise have achieved). While a slight dip in viewers had affected recent historical stories, it was surely THE MASSACRE that made the production team sit up and consider the future of the Doctor's trips back in time. For the first time since the advent of the Daleks the audience sank below the 'psychologically' disastrous 6 million barrier, although the relatively entertaining THE ARK surged back up above 7 million. Unsurprisingly THE CELESTIAL TOYMAKER saw a brief respite bouncing back above 9 million for episode three, but the four decidedly average stories which followed proved too much for an audience looking for freshness and innovation. The public appeared to be giving up on DOCTOR WHO, and who could blame them ? The series was clearly lacking in lustre and the production team were being rewarded with life-threatening ratings, though surprisingly THE GUNFIGHTERS - often cited as the lowest-rated DOCTOR WHO story ever - actually averaged over 6 million, although its audience appreciation index clearly shows it contributed most to the decline. Could the disastrous ratings in fact be the real reason for William Hartnell's departure (ala Colin Baker ?).

THE SMUGGLERS appeared to continue the downward trend in Season 4 but thankfully a new monster was to convince the BBC that there was still life in DOCTOR WHO. THE TENTH PLANET - in contrast to its predecessor - was a definite hit with the public, but even so it's sad to see that William Hartnell was seen off by just over half of the audience he had amassed in his heyday...

We have also included two further columns that measure aspects of DOCTOR WHO's popularity. The first refers to each episodes' position in relation to the rest of the programmes transmitted in a particular week and this provides a consistent measure of DOCTOR WHO's popularity as audience figures - as previously mentioned - are affected by seasonal variations. Note, for example, how better THE CHASE fares in the 'average position' chart as opposed to the 'average audience' chart. The third column refers to the Audience Appreciation Index which measures as a percentage the amount of enjoyment derived for each episode by a panel of around 700 people. However, these figures are not a reliable measure of popularity since members of the panels only served for a period of three months and, as next month's figures for THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS and its repeat screening will show, this made for erratic sets of figures between seasons and probably explains why the 'average audience appreciation' column disproportionately features a cluster of Season 1 stories in top positions. DOCTOR WHO was assumed to be doing satisfactorily so long as it was maintaining an audience appreciation of 50 or more, so probably the most accurate figure was awarded to THE GUNFIGHTERS' episodes averaging only 38 !

STORIES RANKED IN ORDER OF AVERAGE AUDIENCE SIZE(FIGURES IN MILLIONS):

1st)	THE RESCUE	12.5	16th)	THE MYTH MAKERS	8.34
")	THE WEB PLANET	12.5	17th)	CELESTIAL TOYMAKER	8.3
3rd)	DALEK INVASION'	11.9	18th)	THE AZTECS	7.53
4th)	THE ROMANS	11.63	19th)	THE SENSORITES	6.92
5th)	BEYOND THE SUN	10.15	20th)	THE TENTH PLANET	6.75
6th)	GALAXY FOUR	9.9	21st)	REIGN OF TERROR	6.73
7th)	MARCO POLO	9.47	22nd)	THE ARK	6.48
8th)	THE CHASE	9.4	23rd)	THE MASSACRE	6.43
9th)	THE CRUSADE	9.38	24th)	THE TRIBE OF GUM	6.4
10th)	DALEKS' MASTER PLAN*	9.28	25th)	THE GUNFIGHTERS	6.25
11th)	THE SPACE MUSEUM	9.17	26th)	THE WAR MACHINES	5.23
12th)	KEYS OF MARINUS	9.07	27th)	THE SAVAGES	4.9
13th)	THE DALEKS	8.97	28th)	THE SMUGGLERS	4.48
14th)	PLANET OF GIANTS	8.57		AVERAGE = 8.4	
15th)	THE TIME MEDDLER	8.4		*Inc' MISSION TO THE UNKNOWN.	

STORIES RANKED IN ORDER OF AVERAGE POSITION ON TELEVISION CHART:

1st)	THE RESCUE	10	16th)	THE REIGN OF TERROR	37
2nd)	THE WEB PLANET	11	")	MISSION TO'UNKNOWN	37
")	THE CHASE	11	18th)	PLANET OF GIANTS	38
4th)	DALEK INVASION'EARTH	12	")	DALEKS' MASTER PLAN	38
5th)	THE ROMANS	16	20th)	CELESTIAL TOYMAKER	40
6th)	GALAXY FOUR	20	21st)	THE DALEKS	43
7th)	THE SPACE MUSEUM	22	22nd)	THE GUNFIGHTERS	52
")	THE TIME MEDDLER	22	23rd)	THE TENTH PLANET	57
9th)	BEYOND THE SUN	26	24th)	THE SAVAGES	68
")	THE CRUSADE	26	25th)	THE WAR MACHINES	69
11th)	THE KEYS OF MARINUS	27	26th)	THE MASSACRE	82
12th)	THE AZTECS	28	")	THE ARK	82
13th)	THE SENSORITES	34	28th)	THE TRIBE OF GUM	83
14th)	MARCO POLO	35	29th)	THE SMUGGLERS	95
15th)	THE MYTH MAKERS	36		AVERAGE = 40	

STORIES RANKED IN ORDER OF AUDIENCE APPRECIATION(EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE):

1st)	THE DALEKS	62	16th)	THE TIME MEDDLER	53
2nd)	THE TRIBE OF GUM	61	")	THE MASSACRE	53
")	BEYOND THE SUN	61	")	THE ARK	53
")	MARCO POLO	61	19th)	THE ROMANS	51
")	THE KEYS OF MARINUS	61	")	DALEKS'MASTER PLAN	51
6th)	THE AZTECS	60	21st)	THE WEB PLANET	50
")	DALEK INVASION'EARTH	60	")	THE CRUSADE	50
8th)	THE SENSORITES	58	")	THE MYTH MAKERS	50
")	PLANET OF GIANTS	58	24th)	THE SAVAGES	48
")	THE RESCUE	58	")	THE TENTH PLANET	48
11th)	THE CHASE	56	26th)	CELESTIAL TOYMAKER	46
")	MISSION TO'UNKNOWN	56	27th)	THE SMUGGLERS	45
13th)	THE REIGN OF TERROR	55	28th)	THE WAR MACHINES	44
")	THE SPACE MUSEUM	55	29th)	THE GUNFIGHTERS	38
")	GALAXY FOUR	55		AVERAGE = 54	

TOP 15 HARTNELL EPISODES(m):			BOTTOM 15 HARTNELL EPISODES(m):		
1st)	THE WEB PLANET(1)	13.5	1st)	THE SMUGGLERS(3)	4.2
2nd)	THE RESCUE(2)	13.0	2nd)	THE SMUGGLERS(1)	4.3
")	THE ROMANS(1)	13.0	3rd)	THE TRIBE OF GUM(1)	4.4
")	THE WEB PLANET(4)	13.0	4th)	THE SAVAGES(4)	4.5
5th)	THE WEB PLANET(2)	12.5	")	THE SMUGGLERS(4)	4.5
")	THE WEB PLANET(3)	12.5	6th)	THE WAR MACHINES(2)	4.7
7th)	DALEK INVASION'(2)	12.4	7th)	THE SAVAGES(1)	4.8
")	DALEK INVASION'(6)	12.4	8th)	THE SMUGGLERS(2)	4.9
9th)	THE RESCUE(1)	12.0	9th)	THE SAVAGES(3)	5.0
")	THE ROMANS(4)	12.0	10th)	THE WAR MACHINES(3)	5.3
")	THE WEB PLANET(5)	12.0	11th)	THE WAR MACHINES(1)	5.4
12th)	DALEK INVASION'(3)	11.9	12th)	THE SENSORITES(4)	5.5
")	DALEK INVASION'(4)	11.9	")	THE ARK(1)	5.5
14th)	THE ROMANS(2)	11.5	")	THE WAR MACHINES(4)	5.5
")	THE WEB PLANET(6)	11.5	")	THE TENTH PLANET(1)	5.5

RIGHT OF REPLY

HMMM. I have to say I read your article "Under Attack: The Right of Reply" (D.W.B.#52) with mixed feelings. Firstly, feelings of "Well, why not - to a greater extent, regardless of my own opinions on 'Operation WHO' and its validity, I think that you have of course a right of reply, and that you are right, such "editorializing" by a non-Marvel staff writer is woefully out of place in the Monthly's news column". My second feeling was initially sheer furious anger and later extreme disappointment that in fandom, supposedly there to be interested in a mere TV programme, can sink to such depth - ie turning your right of reply into a downright character assassination on me personally. I find this particularly cruel and distasteful primarily because despite your article, I did not write, nor had any knowledge of, the article in question which was written (as Gallifrey Guardian has been ever since Alan McKenzie left Marvel) by Richard Marson.

To put the facts straight to you and D.W.B. readers, my association with Marvel is very limited - bar the odd interview, I have by my choice alone restricted myself to merchandise related articles for nearly three years. When Alan McKenzie quit Marvel his subsequent replacements, despite both being terribly nice people (Cefn especially was, I flatter myself to think, a good friend), had neither the interest nor inclination to make the Marvel monthly the good magazine it was. I do think - no, this is not creeping - that incoming editor John Freeman will restore the Monthly to the heights it deserves, but even so, I am still not interested in expanding my work for them.

That's that done. To go through the relevant parts of your piece next (please bear with me). "Russell's personal frustrated vendettas" over a supposed Shada vs D.W.B. 'zine poll "winnership"? C'mon Gary, we're both a bit too old for infant-school playtime comments like that. Shada only produced one issue after winning the D.W.A.S. poll - the worst issue of the whole run as well. I never hoped to win more than once and when I did, D.W.B. was not the fanzine it is today. Indeed, bearing in mind D.W.B. voted Shada second best to yourself I remember (correct me if I'm wrong) one year, that's a spiteful - and inaccurate to use a term popular with you - statement. The puerile "you're not in The Famous Five anymore..." comment likewise. You don't like D.W.B. getting criticised Gary, understandably, but that kind of personal dig is a little out of place.

By the way, I think your next piece about D.W.B. and "inaccuracy" scores something of an own goal in this case, don't you - your unfounded assumption I wrote the piece could have been averted if you had picked up the phone and asked myself, or Marvel - isn't that the "inaccuracy" you and I so deplore in Richard's piece ?

I would not ever attack Ian Levine either. I really do not place DOCTOR WHO fandom high enough on my list of priorities any longer to make it worthwhile. I certainly don't agree with Ian or yourself about Season 24 - I enjoyed it enormously - but I also enjoy (rather used to enjoy) reading other folks' opinions, regardless of how opposing they were to mine. Ian and I have both been within D.W.A.S. and its spin-offs too long to be bothered to get involved in this petty bitching (in a serious sense). I hope Ian would agree with that, and I'm disappointed he could so readily assume I would pen such a piece. Your comments about "missing episodes" is totally out of place - Richard never hinted at it in his piece anyway !

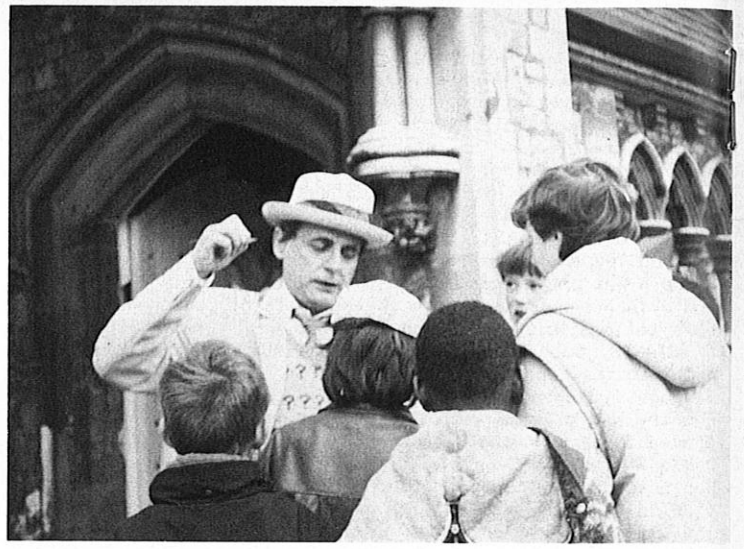
Two final points. I can't dispute whether or not I'm only half as literate as J.Jeremy Bentham, but again I flatter myself to think I'm not too far behind him ! Lastly, and most inaccurately, you refer to my recent "sycophantic interview" with JN-T. Ever since I edited CT way back in 1981/2, JN-T and I have seen very little eye-to-eye. This was not helped a great deal when I started working for the B.B.C. in its Press Offce, one of the more sensitive areas of the Corporation. It has taken five years of bloody hard work and effort to convince JN-T that I'm not a "DOCTOR WHO mole" out to steal the Beeb's secrets and sell them to the world. I believe I have succeeded and in so far as my work on the Monthly involves him - ie that article which Marvel and not I chose to term an interview, but which I and he agreed would be a chance for John to preview the then latest season in the monthly, nothing more - we indeed have a fairly amicable relationship which I hope your article has done little to impair. As the likes of Jeremy and Ian will confirm, JN-T isn't the easiest person to get along with all the time, and to have achieved that - for work reasons alone, nothing to do with Marvel, is something I am pleased about.

I finish by saying that because of the context of your article, which as I stated earlier to a large extent I totally agree with, I'm obviously not now as angry about the article's content as I was a week ago. If I come across as arrogant (God, I can see it now: "99% of D.W.B. readers voted Gary Russell Mr Arrogance and Ego 1988") then I apologise - my usual humour is at a low ebb and perhaps you are right - JJB is at least twice as literate as me - I suspect he'd have said all this far better in my position !

Yours hopefully-far-nicer-than-the-picture-you've-painted-of-me-to-D.W.B.-readers, Gary Russell

(who never wants to see anything by Richard Marson in the Monthly again ? Sign here:)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Naturally I apologise profusely to Gary for assuming he was the author of the piece which in fact Richard (Me ? A hack writer ?) Marson wrote. Of course it would have helped if Marvel did the courtesy of crediting articles to their respective authors and as such they must incur at least some of Gary's wrath in this case of mistaken identity. Hopefully John Freeman will indeed succeed in reviving the magazine's previous higher standards, and certainly the rumour that he is lessening Richard (Now, who shall I make up an interview today with ?) Marson's contributions drastically is a step - I'm sure everyone agrees - in the right direction...



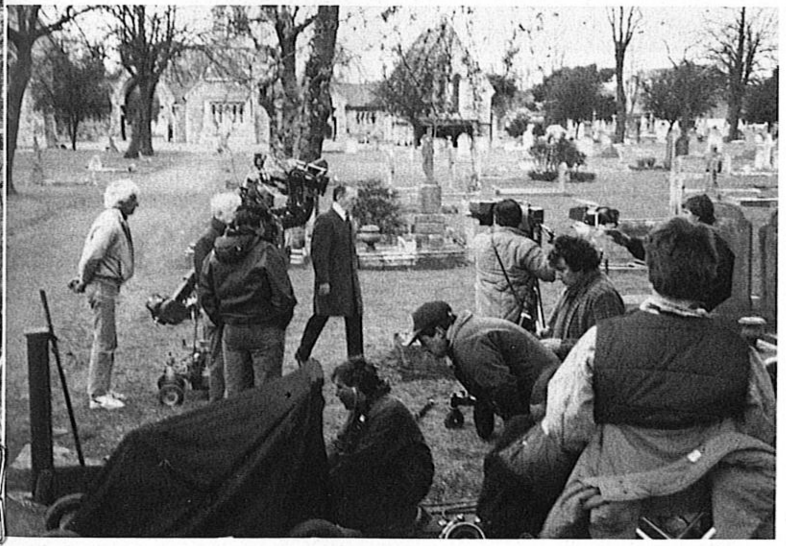
Remembrance of the Daleks

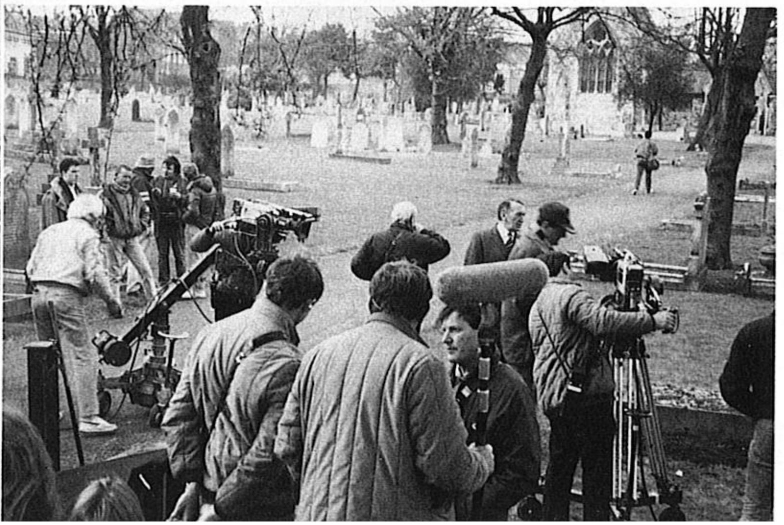
PHOTO SPECIAL

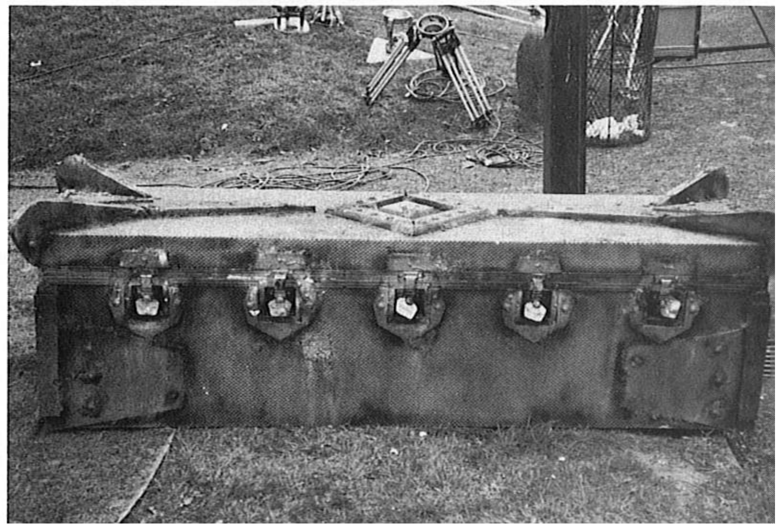
ON HEARING that a day's filming for REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS would be taking place on Friday April 8th at Paddington Cemetry, photographer Sheldon Collins was dispatched to Willesden in north London on a grey spring day to capture the event in pictures for D.W.B. readers. The morning session was spent recording a sombre burial scene with 'Sylv' (as he is affectionately known by the crew members) and Peter Halliday as the blind vicar (see left). Complete with pallbearers, the scene looked remarkably atmospheric and macabre - a far cry from the lighthearted approach of Season 24 - and was in the can in time for lunch.

The afternoon shoot was for the end of the story (episode four) and required most of the principle members of the cast, though sadly no Daleks ! As well as Sylvester and the delightfully bubbly Sophie Aldred as Ace, also present were veteran actors Simon (Upstairs Downstairs) Williams and George Sewell (see right), contributing to one of the strongest guest casts ever assembled for a DOCTOR WHO story (see page 2). The cast and crew were happy to pose for photos and answer questions, but the sudden arrival of John Nathan-Turner at 2 45p.m. soon cast a gloomy shadow over the proceedings. "I hope these photos are for your own use", he bleated threateningly to Sheldon who failed to recognise the debearded outgoing producer at first. "I'll say it again, that these must be for your own private use. I've seen you before with D.W.B. (in the audience at the 1986 PanoptiCon) and I must tell you again, these photos must not be published in any way, otherwise the B.B.C. and Equity will come down on you like a ton of bricks"! He then disappeared for a couple of hours, returned to spend 10 minutes observing the monitors and retired to chat with some friends (see below).

On contacting our solicitor, we in fact learned that while JN-T might act like God and even believe he is God within the B.B.C., within areas designated as public domain he has no right to instruct another member of the public how to conduct their business. To use an analogy, it is perfectly acceptable for photographers to wait at Heathrow Airport and then sell shots of Joan Collins arriving to the newspapers...







DEATHTRAP by Ira Levin

Those who saw Colin Baker in Corpse last year will know that he had a hard act to follow in the thriller genre. His latest venture, a tour of Ira Levin's 70's thriller Deathtrap, is a very worthy successor for Colin and it was on a wet and windy Saturday afternoon that I visited the Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham for a matinée performance.

The story concerns theatrical thriller writer Sidney Bruhl (Colin Baker) who's artistic creativity seems to have dried up along with his money and he is forced to live off his wife Myra (Anita Harris) until his inspiration returns. He is sent a near brilliant script for a new play by an amateur playright Clifford Anderson and in it Bruhl sees the potential for a huge hit play and phones Anderson to ask for a meeting. Myra is afraid that Bruhl might do him physical harm such is his desperation to get a hit play again and she is right. On arriving, in a fury Bruhl seizes Anderson and strangles him, and in a state of shock Myra helps her husband hide the body, but then the local psychic, Helga ten Dorp, arrives with some strange predictions...

More than this I can't divulge as it would spoil the many twists that Ira Levin has so cleverly devised. I would hazzard a guess that even the most seasoned thriller fan would be hard-pressed to pre-determine the developments during the course of the play. Colin Baker is excellent throughout. As in Corpse he has the most difficult role in the play as he is centrestage for virtually the duration of the play. His portrayal of Bruhl is an excellent piece of character acting, easily succeeding in showing the deviousness, and in some places madness, of Bruhl although his American accent took a few minutes to get used to ! The role is also physically demanding and Colin Baker once again shows what a classy stage performer he is. The rest of the cast, including Brenda Longman and Simon Warwick, are well chosen, and the set of Sidney Bruhl's living room - which is part of a converted barn - is particularly well realised. In an era where so many sets are just thrown together for this type of tour, it is nice to see one so resplendent in detail complete with murder weapons and theatrical posters from Bruhl's many plays.

I can recommend Deathtrap wholeheartedly, not just for Colin Baker fans but for everyone who enjoys a good evening out at the theatre and a whodunnit with several twists. It has already visited Cambridge and Eastbourne and will continue touring up till June at the following venues:

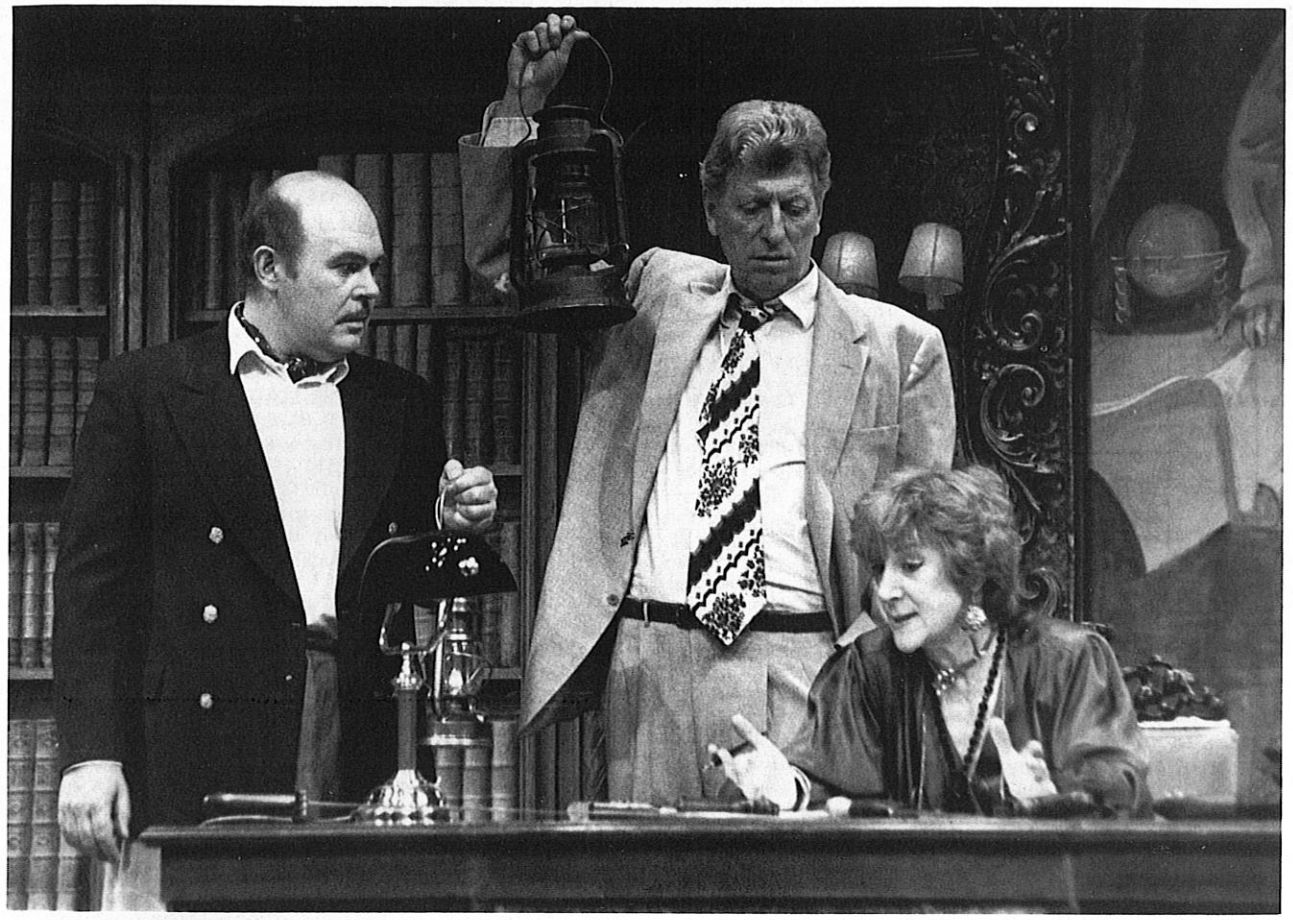
APRIL 18th: Wimbledon Theatre, WIMBLEDON
APRIL 25th: Key Theatre, Embankment Road, PETERBOROUGH
MAY 2nd: University of Warwick Arts Centre, COVENTRY
MAY 9th: Opera House, BUXTON
MAY 16th: Ashcroft Theatre, Park Lane, CROYDON
MAY 23rd: Theatre Royal, Jewry Street, WINCHESTER
MAY 30th: Churchill Theatre, High Street, BROMLEY
JUNE 6th: Theatre Royal, New Road, BRIGHTON
JUNE 13th: Theatre Royal, Sawclose, BATH

TICKET PRICES: £5 - £7 (these will vary from theatre to theatre)
DURATION: 2 hours approximately

THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940 by John Bishop

Good, I thought as I surveyed the publicity handouts for The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 - a new off-Broadway comedy arriving on our shores (off-Broadway being the name theatrical bods give to the smaller, intimate theatres along the great white way), hot on the heels of Nunsense in which I saw Honor Blackman lead to triumph this time last year. With such a talented all-star cast it couldn't really fail, could it ?

Well yes, I'm afraid it does. The basic plot - as told in the programme - is a send-up of such suspense films of the 20's and 30's such as The Cat and the Canary and The Old Dark House and centres around a small band of players gathering for a reading of a new script in the hope that wealthy Elsa Von Grossenkneuten will pump money into the funding of a new Broadway production. What follows is a farce which sees the murder of the maid (only to be replaced by a female Nazi impersonator), a director who is secretly the Stage Door Slasher, a playwright who faints at everything and an endless succession of running in and out of secret passages. But far from being an affectionate parody of the subject matter (as was The Rocky Horror Show of those tacky 50's B-movies), this seems to be just ripping off all the elements that made such thrillers hits in the first place.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Robert Austin, Tom Baker, Sheila Steafel

The visual farce elements are very good but unfortunately the author, John Bishop, has provided a script which is at times very laboured and unfunny. Director Peter Farago has tried to overcome this major handicap with some fast and furious direction but somehow the play never quite seems to gell. The performers are all very talented people and for the most part the play is a waste of such talents. Simon (Hi de Hi) Cadell turns in a solid performance as the struggling comedian Eddie McCuen opposite Maria Friedman as chorus girl Nikki Crandall who, for some reason, is the one who manages to work out all the clues into uncovering the deadly Stage Door Slasher. Top acting honours I feel must go to the two leading ladies: Margaret Courtnay as Elsa Von Grossenkneuten, and Sheila Steafel as the slightly potty playwright Bernice Roth. Both ladies shine like beacons in a storm, especially Miss Steafel who can make even the most drab of dialogue seem hysterically funny (a very underrated actress in my opinion).

As for the man himself, Tom Baker plays the director Ken de la Maize - alias the Stage Door Slasher - and unfortunately I have to report that he is somewhat miscast, with an extremely dodgy American accent to boot ! Tom is a larger than life sort of person who is at his best when playing those larger than life characters which is what made him such a joy in An Inspector Calls last year. His role in The Musical Comedy Murders is not a role which requires his sort of approach and I couldn't help thinking of other character actors who would have played the part more effectively. Basically the part is not large enough for the larger-than-life Tom and as such he seems oddly out of place among the more naturalised performances of the rest of the cast.

I know that the Greenwich Theatre were hoping to take the play to the West End with the same cast, but I think this is a rather remote possibility without drastic rewrites. I don't like being negative, however in my opinion this was a very disappointing evening considering that on paper the production looks like a sure winner. I suggest that if you've got the time and the money you could give it a try and let D.W.B. know if I've been too severe, but I doubt it.

RUN: Until May 7th
TICKET PRICES: £3-10. Write to; Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, London SE10, or phone (01)-858 7755
DURATION: 2 hours and 5 minutes
PERFORMANCE TIMES: Evenings(bar Sunday)at 7 45pm, Saturday matinée at 2 30pm

TRAVEL: Train from Charing Cross BR to Greenwich BR (15 minutes, approx £1 20 return) then 5 minute walk to the theatre.

INTERVIEW OVERLEAF...

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TOM BAKER

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE OFFERED THE ROLE OF THE FOURTH DOCTOR ?
Oh, Christ ! Just great relief that I had a job. At the time I was out of work and earning money on a building site in Pimlico.

BUT YOU'D DONE SOME BIG FILMS BEFORE 'DOCTOR WHO' ?
So ? It doesn't make any difference. There are plenty of people out of work who have done big films and who are broke. I had to do some work, that's all.

DID YOU THINK CONSCIOUSLY ABOUT HOW YOU WERE GOING TO PLAY THE PART ?
No, I don't think consciously about anything I'm going to play - I don't know how I'm going to play anything until the scripts come in.

BUT DIDN'T YOU SIT DOWN WITH THE PRODUCER AND SCRIPT EDITOR TO DEVISE YOUR CHARACTER ?
No, they had no idea either ! I'd signed a contract before they asked me what I was going to do with it so by then it was too late because I was under contract !

SO WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE CHARACTER AND COSTUME WHEN IT CAME OUT ?
Well, I didn't watch it so I don't know. I used to be aware of the reaction to it but it was all a series of 'accidents'. A lot of times afterwards, like now, people think that there was a great deal of thought that went into it. I don't mean that it was entirely thoughtless, but there wasn't a great deal of calculation. They just thought I would be alright for the part - I mean, they'd seen me in some special effects picture - and I got the part and I did it.

DOCTOR WHO isn't an acting part any more than Sherlock Holmes is an acting part or James Bond is an acting part. They're not 'acting' parts, they're just ciphers, aren't they - they're just utterly predictable. There's no change in the characters of Sherlock Holmes, DOCTOR WHO or James Bond or lots of other heroes. In television, surely, the paradox of so-called 'acting' is once a programme reaches a part in popularity people don't change. In other words, to a large extent in series on television it's the death-knell of acting because the audience don't want any change. There's no difference between the characters on Z Cars on the first day it happened really than on the last day, or Dynasty or Dallas. Those people aren't acting, they just are; they're caught in this vacuum, this time-capsule, where they never change, where the women never get older (they just get bitchier !).

BUT DON'T YOU THINK IT CHANGED UNDER THE INFLUENCES OF DIFFERENT PRODUCERS ? FOR EXAMPLE GRAHAM WILLIAMS' COMEDY FROM THE GOTHIC HORROR OF PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE ?
I don't know why everyone found me funny ? I found it funny because I find everything funny. Things that I don't find funny just make me bad-tempered.

When you're talking about television you're very rarely talking about acting. You must get that into your head (and anyone else's head as well). Go on, next question...

GRAHAM WILLIAMS SAID THAT YOU USED TO GET VERY UPSET WITH THE CHARACTERS OF THE COMPANIONS AND YOU WANTED TO CHANGE THEM ?
I did, yes. I used to get really pissed off with the characters of the companions. I thought they were all boring, except for Elisabeth. I liked Sarah and I liked very much Ian Marter because I admired him because he was marvellous to be with and very clever. But yes, I did get fed up with the girls. I thought that it used to get rather predictable.

DIDN'T YOU WANT TO CHANGE THE COMPANIONS TO MAKE IT DIFFERENT?
I wanted to change it to anything to relieve the boredom. I wanted an arthritic old lady or a naked child with snaggled teeth and spiky hair. I loathe things that are 'cosy'. I loathe the predictability of practically everything - that the only sort of nice people are pleasant-looking and well-spoken people. That bores me to death. I'm actually interested in oddness and more ordinary things. I don't like much of what I see on television. Well, in fact I'm not qualified to talk about television, I mean, I don't even watch it ! The last 10 weeks in Dublin I haven't set my eyes on a TV set, I haven't listened to one minute on the wireless and I haven't got a telephone - so I'm having a great time here !

AND YOU NEVER WATCHED 'DOCTOR WHO' EVEN WHEN YOU WERE IN IT ?
Never, except bits of it when I saw the editing. I just remember making it (it was quite funny !).

DID YOU ENJOY YOUR TRIP TO PARIS ?
It was rather jolly actually. It was very easy to film there because no-one had ever heard of DOCTOR WHO so they just thought I was some kind of elderly, eternal student.

I don't want to disappoint the fans of the thing but it was a very long time ago and it's very important that people understand that at the beginning it was just a job - it was just another job. If you're out of work, any job will do, and a whole year's job - because that's what I got, a whole year's contract - to me it seemed heaven to have a whole year of regular work because I was on a building site. I had no idea what was going to happen in it, I mean occasionally I'd see DOCTOR WHO if I was looking after some kids or something like that, but I had no idea about that.

YOU'VE SAID THAT SOME OF THE SCRIPTS WERE VERY SAMEY AND DULL. HOW DO YOU THINK THEY COULD HAVE BEEN IMPROVED ?
I don't know how they could have been improved. The thing is, of course, they got repetitive for me because I did so many. I mean, I realise the difficulty of the writers; it is difficult to write for television because television is a kind of incinerator - it just devours material at a colossal rate. Given a number of situations I'd done them all, and they started coming on again ! I mean, I wasn't a writer, I wasn't a script editor. I got on mostly quite well with the editors actually, especially Doug Adams.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE DIRECTORS ?
I got on well with all of those fellows because I knew them so well and they knew me so well - I knew their work backwards and they knew my work backwards - and it was important. It's important in that kind of television to be able to work very fast. Sometimes I was working on four scripts at a time and things weren't necessarily shot in sequence so one had to be very fast.

DO YOU RECALL ANY STORIES WITH PARTICULARLY GOOD CASTS ?
No, I thought the standard of the invited actors was excellent most of the time as far as I can remember. It was marvellous I thought and they seemed very happy to be in it.

OUTSIDE THE SHOW DID YOU ENJOY THE PUBLICITY YOU USED TO DO ?
I enjoyed doing the publicity promoting the programme because I take publicity very seriously to promote anything that I happen to be in. But I also enjoy the anonimity, I mean, since it's over and sice my hair's been cut off in the last year or so I'm not recognised in the streets, so it's been a great relief to me. Obviously people are interested in people's pasts, that's all they've got to go on - the future is guest work and the present is usually exaggerated - but my past is well in the past. What, it's the fifth year I've been away from it I think ? The details of it recede in my mind. I mean, I didn't watch it when I was in it and I certainly didn't watch it after I left - I wasn't involved - and have very rarely been back at the BBC since.

ONE TIME WHEN YOU WERE BACK AT THE B.B.C. WAS FOR 'THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES', AND OF COURSE YOU ARE PLAYING SHERLOCK HOLMES AGAIN IN 'THE MASK OF MORIARTY'. IS THAT A ROLE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO PLAY ?
No it wasn't. I didn't see myself as Sherlock Holmes but it was the same production team that had picked me for DOCTOR WHO and thought that I'd be a very good Sherlock Holmes, and as you probably know it turned out to be a not very successful production I don't think. It wasn't very well received, nor did I particularly enjoy playing Sherlock Holmes in that. I mean, this is different, a modern play and also I'm a great admirer of Hugh Leonard.

DO YOU ENJOY THE CONVENTIONS AND MEETING THE FANS ?
Well, I did enjoy meeting the fans, but sometimes the fans would get me confused with the character and this is a very grave error. I've been with people today from St.Lois, Missouri (there are people coming from Texas next week and people from California in on Monday or Tuesday), well, I mean it's great and I'm very touched that people are so loyal, but I am not that character, you know. DOCTOR WHO was just a character I played - it wasn't me.

If I wanted to I could go and live in America on DOCTOR WHO where DOCTOR WHO is still being marketed, and of course the science fantasy and science fiction conventions are huge businesses, but I can't be doing that.

DO YOU ENJOY THE BIG CONVENTIONS ?
Well sometimes. Yes, I enjoy the odd one but they get very repetitive. If someone invites me to go by Concorde to New York and I've got nothing to do on a Friday, I'll fly to New York and see a couple of thousand people and try and amuse them for an hour but, I mean, that's all I can do. But people who mistake me for the character or see into the character, dare one say profundities ? No, I don't think anyone would go that far, but you know, it was a job and it was a jolly job and I enjoyed doing it.

ASIDE FROM 'DOCTOR WHO' YOU'VE PLAYED SUCH CHARACTERS AS OSCAR WILDE AND RASPUTIN. DID YOU DO MUCH RESEARCH INTO THEIR REAL CHARACTERS ?
The thing is it doesn't matter how much research you do into a character. Finally you can only play the character that's in the script, but yes, one does one's duty and you read a few books. I've read everything by Oscar Wilde and 20 or 30 books about him so I was very familiar with his work anyway.

DO YOU ENJOY PLAYING REAL LIFE CHARACTERS ?
Yes, I enjoy them because anything I take on I try to enjoy, even sometimes if I make mistakes. There's no point in not trying to enjoy something because it's not like deciding to go to the cinema in the afternoon or going to Phoenix Park; I decided to come to Dublin and it's going to take up three months of my life and so I actually moved my will and said I'm going to enjoy it and any kind of disappointment that comes my way I'll just brush aside. Otherwise I would be shattered !

HAVE YOU A FAVOURITE PART OR CHARACTER ?
No, I don't think so. At the moment my favourite part is Sherlock Holmes because that's what I'm doing every night.

THERE IS TALK OF A FILM OF THIS PRODUCTION. WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN THAT ?
I'm so sceptical about films because most of them are so terrible aren't they, and one does films for money I suppose. I mean, you don't do them for any other reason I can't imagine, or publicity - that's the same as money, a kind of investment - but after a while you get to understand what the possibilities are in films and if they made a film of this play, which I think they could do beautifully, there is no possibility (I hope you'll write this down because I don't trust you fellows because you can edit this totally the way you like and inevitably I'm disappointed because people edit badly); I swear to God, if this thing gets into ever being made into a film, the possibility of Tom Baker playing Sherlock Holmes in this film must be absolutely zero, absolutely zero, because when a good script or a good book comes up and a film production buy it, they don't take any chances at all, they back hot favourites. I don't know if you know anything about Michael Collins but I happen to know something about him because I'm interested and I read Irish history. If they ever made a film about Michael Collins in the next few years do you know who's going to play him ? Robert Redford ! So don't talk to me about films and what I might do in films; my chances in films are ZERO, except playing small parts. The rules of logic don't apply to film stars, I mean, the thought of Robert Redford playing Michael Collins just makes me giggle. It's just absurd - you can't have a film star credibly playing an historical character like Collins. But that's the predictability of films. Popular films are utterly, utterly predictable and most of them utterly boring to me. I prefer books to films myself.

DURING YOUR TIME ON 'DOCTOR WHO' THERE WAS RUMOUR OF A 'DOCTOR WHO' FILM.
That's right. I was taken out to lunch last week by the production office with some American fans who were in London and someone asked me again would I like to do a DOCTOR WHO film and I just simply laughed in their faces. I'd refuse, I mean, why should I play it ? Why shouldn't they get someone else to play it ? Why doesn't the current man play it ? I don't know...

IS YOUR CYNICISM ABOUT FILMS...
Not my cynicism at all. You mustn't understand me about cynicism. Cynicism actually is the absence of sensible feeling. Oscar Wilde defined cynicism as a cynic being a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. That is a very, very good working definition of a cynic. I think I do know the value of certain things but you can't expect me to be anything except rather sceptical about what poses for popular movies no more than I'm sceptical about what poses for popular television or most popular music. Most of what's popular is pap and if you get into it you do it for the money and the fun.

DOES YOUR OPINION OF FILMS GROW OUT OF YOUR TIME IN FILMS IN THE EARLY '70s ?
No, it grows out of actually seeing them. I'm very keen on

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films and I see films - not many of the popular films - but I do go and see films and I sometimes see serious films that I love and admire and would dearly like to be in. Not many.

DO YOU PREFER STAGE WORK THEN ?
No, I don't prefer one to the other at all. I just prefer whatever I'm doing at the moment. If I was doing a film at the moment - no matter how sloppy it was - and I'd committed myself to it, I'd be very preoccupied with the film. Actors are not like dentists or accountants or people who work for the Bank of Ireland. I'm not going to stay playing Sherlock Holmes; Shelock Holmes is the most important part of my life at the moment until the end of November and then I shall just elbow Sherlock Holmes and start the next thing and then the next thing becomes the most important part of my life. That's the difference between actors and dentists and other people. You keep jumping from one thing to the other and frequently abandoning a total success to try the unknown.

HAVE YOU ANY PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ?
Absolutely no plans at all. Actors will tell you they've got plans and most of them are telling lies. How can actors plan - about five actors in the world can plan ! They're just waiting for something to come in and are telling lies to the press to satisfy or kid themselves.

I turned down a couple of commercial jobs on Wednesday in advance that I didn't want to do but they were quite trivial and nothing of any importance at all. No, all I plan is to stay well and happy and fit and try and do some good work and please the public.

TOM BAKER, THANK YOU

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY DARAGH CARVILLE, COLM HACKETT AND ALAN MILLAR

AS A CONTRAST TO MR.BAKER'S RATHER BLASE ATTITUDE ABOVE, HERE IS A RARE INTERVIEW WITH THE MAN TAKEN IN HIS HEYDAY AS THE DOCTOR (COPYRIGHT 1979 'ZERINZA', INTERVIEW BY AND REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF ANTHONY HOWE).

EXCLUSIVE FOR ZERINZA READERS - *TOM BAKER TALKS WITH ANTONY HOWE*

On the last day of Tom Baker's Sydney visit I was not really hopeful of being granted an interview because the very idea seemed anathema to the ABC Promotions people, but after several postponements the day had arrived for the meeting with Tom Baker at the Wentworth Hotel. Tearing off from my office job, I panted into the resplendent foyer, bearing my tape recorder and briefcase with copious notes and lists of questions. A conflicting assortment of emotions fought within me.

This confrontation might be a total disaster. From the first day Tom Baker's opening remarks to the Press on "adult fans" had reduced me to a gloomy pessimism on the outcome. We were "irredeemable" and University students were cultists and escapists, and anyone over the age of nine was merely "on the bandwagon, pretending to understand what the kids like."

Mr.Baker's personality is aggressively direct and he had already shown himself to be a devastating adversary in the many interviews given over the past two weeks. My friends who had attended the 2 book-signing sessions at the Grace Bros.stores in Chatswood and Roselands had reservations about the current Doctor's attitude to adults - "he looked as if he was going to explode", tended to be the general concensus of opinion.

After thirteen years of enjoying a programme, after three years of alarums and excursions with the ABC's policy-makers and programmers, I was determined to present Zerinza readers with an interview about the series, no matter how I might find the present leading actor as an individual.

So it was a distinct relief to be met by Graham Bell, the ABC's Sydney Rep coping with Dr.Who's visit, who had started by being discouraging about the likelihood of arranging the interview but who had at last managed to bring it about. He introduced me to Tom Baker and I was immediately reassured by a welcoming grin, so familiar to Dr.Who fans. (He really has splendid teeth, and no, dear readers, they are NOT false!)

"Let's go and have a drink," suggested Baker, with a longing glance towards the bar. In we went, (I mentally counting the cash in my wallet - I'm not used to the pub scene of "shouts" and couldn't tell you the difference between a middy and a schooner if you paid me). The bar was a horrible confusion of noise and voices. Mr. Baker's expletives were unprintable. We had only an hour before an interstate phone-call would put an end to the interview, so we took the lift to his room, where the fridge dispensed cooling tinnies and quiet descended. We would never have managed to talk in the bar and my concentration would have dissipated in the fumes and smoke haze.

Tom Baker hurled his large frame into a chair and he stared at me as I fiddled nervously with the tape-recorder levels and levers. "Is that working?"

I nodded, shuffling the sheaf of papers on my clipboard, swallowed the twitching frog in my throat and asked the first question that came into my head. "You must have come across a lot of people from the series?"

Tom Baker's eyes looked concerned. "Yes, I met Patrick Troughton - did you know that Pat had a heart attack? A couple of weeks ago, just as I was leaving, I met him in Birmingham where he was doing, for the second time, the 'Olde Curiosity Shoppe', and he did tell me he was finding it fiendishly trying, which was an odd thing. It's not that he's a great age, but 'Quilp' is a bounding-around, physically very 'sudden' part, all right when you're 42, but he's 52 now!"

He gazed abstractedly into his glass and to change the depressing subject I remarked:

"It's been difficult to form a really cohesive fanclub in Australia, because even Sydney is sprawled all over the place, and it's too hard to hold meetings."

Tom Baker nodded understandingly and answered, "I don't think they meet very often in the United Kingdom. I was very impressed by the organising for the annual meeting."

"Was that the Panopticon?"

"I think that was the second one, the first was held in a Methodist Church Hall and they painted it out and had a lovely two-day event. The next one I went to a few months ago, they took Imperial College and it was extremely impressive. They can only meet once a year, coming from all over the country. Most of it is done by correspondence, the fans break down into little, friendly groups and apart from contact with the Secretary at Headquarters, they develop, sharing critical views, depending on what their sympathies or aversions are. It's very difficult for me to cope with the disappointment of some fans, because by definition, they are zealots and often get protective about some aspect of the programme. They get very strong views and take out that sense of betrayal by writing protesting letters to me."

I commiserated, "That's not fair."

"It's not good, because there is very little I can do about it. Often they are preoccupied with tiny details, as opposed to the overall picture. I would not do anything to subvert the character. I think the British Appreciation Society understands, that such as it is, from time to time some people might be disappointed." He ran a hand through his woolly mop and sighed, looking defensive.

I thought, let's not introduce the subject of adult fans! I asked, "Were you not well on the flight, or just before you left London?"

"I was ill on the flight coming out, which was very distressing on an aeroplane, specially on the last leg from Singapore." I remembered the welcome at the airport, and how exhausted he'd been, and abruptly switched the subject again.

"I might just leap in about the 'Scratchman' film. I've heard the film is a possibility still, is there anything in that?"

Those enormous eyes gleamed with interest. We were going to find this engrossing.

"'Dr.Who Meets Scratchman'", which was the provisional title, - I thought a very good title - is now to be called 'Dr.Who and the Big Game'. I suppose the details are known out here? Yes? Well, Ian Marter and I wrote it and then James Hill, who has done some good films, wrote the screenplay, and at long last the options in the end are James Hill and me. There are two problems, one is raising finance, which I don't know will be all that difficult now, and I think the discussions about production money to shoot the exteriors in Australia is an optimistic thought. In 'Scratchman', or 'Big Game', there are a lot of big exterior sequences. We wanted to go to Lanzarote *(Canary Islands)* because it has that lively, clack, shiny moon-scape there, but I think it would be better to come to Australia if we could. The second problem is, what time would I have to do it? If it happens at all, because I can't go on and on doing this part - the audience should be allowed a change, so it would have to be done in the Spring of 1980, starting in January. But before I consider giving someone else a go, I would like to get the film in first! I've written the film. People take awful risks when they adapt television things for a film, they inflate a television script and what is acceptable on a 24 inch set at home, won't stand the big screen. So it's got to be conceived filmicly. There's some big epic in it now, a sort of galactic mischief-maker, to be called 'Scratchman.'

"Something to do with the Devil?"

"Scratchman actually is an old word for the Devil, rather like Old Nick, or Beelzebub. This is why I liked it, he thrives on chaos and we frustrate him. At one time the ideal casting people were interested. I know Vincent Price was interested in playing 'Scratchman'...then we wanted Twiggy to play the girl. Twiggy has a zany quality, a bit 'off the ground' quality that would be very good. Now she's had a baby and I don't know if we could get her, but I don't think it would be difficult to get a good girl in it".

He sat back pensively and I had a quick vision of Twiggy tagging along behind the Doctor, plaintively plucking at his scarf as she tiptoed over the Nullarbor stones. I asked, "You wanted to exploit the interior of the TARDIS, I believe?"

"I've always though it a terrible pity that I'm often engaged in galactic uproar, when if the TARDIS logically is larger on the inside it can be immensely large, can't it?"

"Like the "Invasion of Time?"

"That's right - you can do anything you want, you can have a garden as big as Queensland and in the garden is where some of the uproar takes place. In other words, a domestic crisis within the TARDIS, inside the Doctor's head, on a personal level. What are his views, and so on, what flowers he likes and, indeed, the ideas - has be got a photograph album? Has he got a Black Museum? Has he a VTR on the past adventures, does he keep records of what he's done? All this would interest writers."

"When Patrick Troughton started, I believe he had a 500 year diary."

Tom Baker smiled reminiscently. "Patrick played his very quaintly."

"The Cosmic Hobo."

"It was a good phrase, that! We appeared to have moved on, the fans want it more rapid and decisive, and funnier. There's a general consensus that it should be laced with some humour. You are a year behind, here, you've got Leela, Louise Jameson. We have a Time Lady called Romana. We did that back-to-back, as we work very fast. So you've got a whole story with the girl played by Mary Tamm. She was the juvenile lead in 'The Odessa File'. Mary has just completed the one session, the shortest time in the series. On March 15th I start filming with Lalla Ward, a very enigmatic-looking blonde, very pretty in a strange way. She has dome some very good work, she was in "Rosebud' for Otto Preminger. Last year she did 'The Prince and the Pauper' with George C.Scott and Oliver Reed. She played the child in the 'Duchess of Duke Street', Gemma Jones' daughter. She's got a strange quality that will be a help to the programme. So you've got that to look forward to. I shall look forward to it, to begin with. We've got a brand-new Script Editor, Douglas Adams, a very young man not long down from Cambridge, who worked with the Monty Python crowd on the scripts, and he won an award for a marvellous series on the radio called 'Diary of a Galactic Hitchhiker'. He's very lively and dynamic and innovative, in the sense that he will approach it; and very brave - he even asked Tom Stoppard if he would write a script, which was a nice thing to do, and Tom said he was rather busy - you've got to try, Tom just might have said, "Well, all right!'"

I looked sideways at Graham Bell, who was watching our animated discussion. I said, "You've got to have a bit of a hide, this is why I got this interview! What do you think was wrong with the two films about the Daleks? Was it because they were taken from the television plays?"

"Yes," replied Tom Baker, "They were adaptations. The first terrible mistake was to miscast it. The didn't give it to Billy Hartnell, they gave it to Peter Cushing who was largely associated with horror films, and under the pressure of making the film in about 6 weeks, Cushing had to give an impression of Billy Hartnell in order to get an impact in the United Kingdom. So he was playing a benevolent, doddery old gent who could not even sort out a fuse let alone the Daleks! Again, showing the idea of television adaptation, they split the narrative - the script's dilemma which the Doctor had to solve was not complex enough to carry through 95 minutes of a film. So they had a second string, with some travellers I think, two things going on, and they also managed to have about 50 Daleks in one of the scenes, but it was not at all threatening. Roy Castle, and Bernard Cribbins the actors, could not make a contribution because they were giving their version of someone else. It's like a young fan giving an impression of me, they might be briefly amusing or arresting, but it won't endure. On film and television you need to widen the thing, when something is well established you can't struggle for it, the camera will blow your cover. You can't do sleight-of-hand stuff you have to grip it, in your head. You can paper over the narrative by sheer expertise, but not when you 're starting."

"In all the series you get one or two of the stories in which "This-time-the-Universe-will-be-destroyed', or there's the worst baddie imaginable and you've got to defeat him. Do you feel there is a tendency on the writers' part, to over dramatise your crises?"

"This is really a Script Editor's problem. Writers are not in cahoots, so each is writing separately. One interesting fact is that although the Doctor occasionally makes references to his past, (they indicate he's a great age, with great experience) he very rarely uses this expertise. Each writer begins as if the Doctor has no fears of anything, at least I try to insist that they start like that, very low-key - and then something occurs. For example, the Doctor is not frightened of a big monster that comes over to the TARDIS, 19 feet tall. I might go up and say 'Hello!' and then he clubs me to the ground, and it's only when I recover consciousness that I say to the girl, 'You've got to look out for him!' That is the first thing, and then his innocence is broken, some kind of threat, and I suppose this is why writers often fall into the trap of each one being the worst yet."

I pushed on with the argument, "Yes, but for years and years the Daleks were the most evil power in the Universe, and then there was Sutekh, and Omega, and various other beings."

He chuckled, "That's right, it could be much more intense and more localised. I think that is a very valid point. The Daleks are coming back this year," he added, rather glumly.

"I gather you are not too keen on the Daleks?"

"To make it work, you need a lot of ingenuity. We often laugh, because if the Doctor ran upstairs how could the Daleks get after him, or indeed, anyone? The easy way to deal with a Dalek Invasion would be to put three treads around the entire country and they couldn't do anything! They couldn't travel. Their predictability is tiresome. I can't understand why they are so potent, unless it is for historical reasons, as so many fans got used to them, and also I suppose small children find Daleks very easy to imitate." He frowned, "They don't say anything complicated, just 'Exterminate'".

"No real character," I added, "You couldn't expect a Dalek to feel pity." He nodded.

"I must admit that the character of Davros was good, and Mike Wishart, who did that, did it well. It's possible to conceive a situation where the Doctor might align himself with the Daleks for some strong reason, to save the balance of power. He might line up with the Daleks as political groups make alliances in real life." I suggested another idea.

"If the Doctor was caught between the Cybermen and the Daleks, well..." Baker grinned at me, saying:

"That would be interesting!" He gestured expressivley, "The Cybermen trying to expand, or take over the Universe or some section of it, would cause a big shift in an entire galaxy! And the complexity of some kind of power plays are compromised, for the greater good in the end." He paused and asked, "The dog, K-9, you haven't seen yet? It's a huge success in the United Kingdom."

Graham Bell sat forward and announced, "The 'Invisible Enemy' begins on 26th February."

I had to have a stab at the ABC policy, now was the chance. Looking at Tom Baker I said, "The Brain of Morbius' has the Doctor nearly dying, mind-wrestling with Morbius and pushing you back through your incarnations. That story has been "A" rated - are the ABC going to show it?"

Tom Baker's expectant smile brought a hasty answer which was more of an apology, from the ABC Rep, who said, "We tried to schedule it, but took it out again for an evening time-slot."

I tried to convey my disapproval by flinging another bone of contention at Tom Baker. "You have blows with Mary Whitehouse, but we have blows with the Censor. Maybe they're in cahoots. They chopped little bits out of some stories - 'Robots of Death' they chopped and 'Talons of Weng Chiang' where the rat grabs Leela by the leg!. They rate some of the sories "A" and quite a few, four of five Jon Pertwee stories, have not been shown. In 'The Brain of Morbius' you are shown to be very vulnerable, you are not a superman or an aloof super-being."

Tom Baker screwed his face into a thoughtful grimace. "Alfred Hitchcock demonstrated in his life's work, that the concern and tension are in proportion to the characters' vulnerability, usually by allowing the audience to know more than the characters, and therefore if I was too omniscient or altogether too grand, there would be no tension. That's the technique used to encourage the audience to suspend disbelief." He had said all this before, several times.

"The mystery-man, how much of that character should be given away and yet remain part of the enigma, the alien Time Lord character?"

"One of the hardest things is to keep the alien quality. I can't be so alien that I need redefining. I've got a body, and a scarf and hat, so it's very difficult to suggest that I come from somewhere else. How is it, no matter where I turn up in the galaxy, no one is surprised at the way I'm dressed? No one says, 'Isn't he dressed in a very strange way, General?'"

"You were dressed appropriately in 'Weng Chiang', but in 'Masque of Mandragora', where everybody is dressed to a code of conduct, and gentlemen dress in one way, along you come quite out of place and nobody bats an eyelid."

He grinned again, "In melodrama there's some kind of sweetness about that, like the early Buster Keaton comedy two-reelers, all founded on sweet, innocent stories. In Dr.Who there's a kind of sweetness about it, no dirty in-fighting, or ghastly recognisable violence. No heartbreak, the Doctor would never get involved with a girl and then hurt her, or allow himself to be hurt. Obviously, it doesn't grate on the fans, but occasionally it would be nice to actually have someone amazed at the way I'm dressed, or be so impressed by me helping them that they all dress up like me! I could have an army (in Dr.Who armies are only 16 men strong) all dressed up like me and I could be drilling them, all tripping over their scarves..."

It was a hilarious picture. Even Graham Bell managed a nervous smile. I looked at the list of questions - time for another angle. "Would you like to have a background, with a family? The first Doctor was supposed to have Susan as a grand-daughter. Some people explain that away by saying it was only a term of endearment." He thought for a moment, then agreed with a shrug.

"That's probably the best way of explaining it. They were feeling their way at the beginning, then suddenly had to make a story around the character, a myth, rather quickly. I don't think it would stand the involvement with a family now. The modern audience would prefer him to be strange and not too many cosy, recognisable contexts - like kitchens..."

What an idea, Dr.Who playing the controls on a Whirlpool accompanied by Dame Edna...I hastily explained: "That's not what I had in mind! If you had had a family, and left them behind?"

"You'd need rather delicate writing to go back. It might be solved by the device of a photograph album, and some insights to go back with the pictures, to make veiled references..."

"Hartnell kept referring to being an exile. Possibly he could have been thrown out?"

"Yes," Tom Baker reflected, "He did go on about being an exile. It would be interesting to use Gallifrey and the Time Lords' Panopticon to make them quite quickly and effectively share some of the plot load. In melodrama, the hero is set-up for a big job and the dreary stuff of beating out the situation, as in James Bond, is done by someone else. 'M' calls Bond in and says, 'Now listen, James, this is the situation..' and then James says 'I see' and they go down to the Quartermaster and draw the gear. And off you go to Singapore! I have the problem of carrying all that myself and in such small units, you have to get to the crisis fast. Someone says, 'What's happening, Doctor?' and I say 'Now look, this is the way it goes.' We should try involving some character from Gallifrey."

"That's the 'Celestial Intervention Agency - the C.I.A.'", I murmured. '"The Deadly Assassin' has not been shown here either, the same thing, "A" rated." Another jab at the Censor, jolly good!

Tom Baker frowned prodigiously and glared at the squirming Mr. Bell. "I thought it one of the best ones!" he thundered. "It was violent, but surreally violent!"

Hastily Graham Bell intervened, "These programmes have not been lost, they will eventually go to air."

Time to defuse the overcharged atmosphere. I examined my notes again. "Events in one story will flatly contradict another one - you get lack of continuity. Some fans get het-up about details, but do you feel there's an advantage in not being bound by previous stories?"

Tom Baker liked this. "You see, if you get into an area of dogma, it's limiting. If you can bend time and space, then attitudes can change! They are not fundamental changes, so people have to be flexible about this, as it would limit us. There are ferocious limitations on the character of the Doctor, which requires great ingenuity on the part of the Director, and the actor, to make it bearable. How can you define the Doctor to someone who has never seen the series? It's practically beyond me to explain but he does remain dramatic and he engages the audiences' imagination, and I suppose it's because one gets ingenious within those limitations. You don't 'flatly contradict' them. I don't suppose any fan would have noticed, but when a girl is hurt and I have to handle her, I do it very clumsily, as if to suggest that I'm not very good at handling girls. And I always affect surprise if anyone is interested in power - I get out my jelly babies or yo-yo to cut across it. In any moral dilemma the hero is predictable, he will always come down on the side of good." He paused. "There are varieties of pace, if an actor is coming through a door there's a way which can be very surprising, when it's an ordinary thing to do. It's the responsibility of the actor to be surprising or sometimes touching, or funny - or a bit angry." He went on to speak of the the role being much sort after, and how he was scathing to writers who were slack in their thinking and wrote in things like the Doctor using a knife, which Baker refuses to do. I consulted my notes again.

"The last season you did with the overall theme of the Time Keys. I gather there was a good Guardian and a bad Guardian and the Time Lords were involved. How do you feel that worked?"

"That was a policy decision from the Production Office. I thought that having an overall theme created an additional difficulty, because in a small unit of half-an-hour, and getting to a crisis point about every minute or two, it was very difficult to keep two things in the foreground. I hope we did keep them in the audiences' mind, but I think that an umbrella theme could be an obstacle."

"Time Lords, I gather, foisted the Lady Romana character on you in the story?" He waved a hand.

"I suppose we will make the transference from Mary Tamm to Lalla by the usual reincarnation."

"Is Lalla a Time Lady?" I asked, and he lifted his eyebrows with a wry expression.

"It's very difficult to dispose of the Time Lady! Although some fans would jib at that, because at one time I explicitly said to Elizabeth Sladen that she couldn't come to Gallifrey because women were not allowed. But you can get a bit Jesuitical about that and say, 'Well, the Doctor meant aliens, that is, earth people', because on Gallifrey there are females!"

"Leela went to Gallifrey, that cuts across the continuity," I objected and he laughed.

"That's right. I was very sad about the disposal of Leela. The 'traditional' thing about her falling in love with someone was pitiful, awful. We could have done better than that."

"What liberties can you take with the scripts if you feel it's a bit dreary or contradictory?"

He shook his head, "I don't get to pre-production meetings, I'm too busy, but I spend a lot of time in the evenings working on scripts. Often I get them just before the read-through and obviously I'm allowed a certain amount of influence because I'm not unskilled at writing dialogue, especially for Dr.Who - the litmus test for our scripts. I don't look out only for my own scenes, because I want everybody to be as good as possible. But if you have a scene with 4 or 5 characters and you read it through, I think I have a good ear for any potential tensions in it. We go through it once or twice and they say, 'What are you moaning about, Tom'? and I say, 'Let's change the names and just juggle them round and listen again, and if it makes no difference, the scene is slack.' Then if the Director concedes it's slack, we rip it out and re-write it."

"What stories have you been most displeased with?"

He chuckled quietly, "I think it would be very smug of me to say I've been delighted with only some, but some have pleased me more than others. I liked 'The Ark in Space' a lot, I liked 'The Brain of Morbius'", with a challenging stare at Mr. Bell, "and it had possibilities, considering it was really a 'pastiche Frankenstein'. And then the 'Deadly Assassin'." Again his large eyes surveyed us with an air of defiance, before he made a gesture and remarked, "I don't want you to think I can stand up and say 'We are not doing this scene!'" Here he flung back his head in a grandiloquent way, as if about to turn on a temperamental act. "I can't. If I did a confrontation like that, somebody could turn on me very cruelly, but very correctly and say, 'You are just paid to say the lines.' Tom Baker shrugged. "In modern ways of working with actors and Directors, no one does that, because you have to contribute and sometimes the contributions don't come from me; the assistant floor-manager (who is about 19), will suddenly make a remark and illuminate a whole scene. So you look for that group effort, without just letting every Tom, Dick and Harry come in with his pennyworth. You would bet bogged down, but informed comment you take from anywhere you like."

I looked quickly at my watch. Our time was rapidly diminishing and still there were many questions to ask. The local Press reports had covered such news as the Renegade Monk, the Lad from Liverpool, the Actor's Ego. Where did his interests lie and in what form would the Dr.Who series progress? So I said, "Do you prefer Science Fiction, Fantasy or Historical Dr.Who stories?"

"I prefer the fantasy world. I read a lot of science fiction, but not as an addict, I'm a science fantasy devotee. My favourite writers are Kurt Vonnegut, who is very easy and free-wheeling, and always informed, with a wonderful sense of compassion. He's never really recovered from Dresden. *(The fire-bombings of World War II)* But currently a favourite writer of fantasy is Stanislaw Lem, who is simply wonderful, so free-wheeling and brilliantly translated into English. 'The Star Diaries' and 'The Futurological Congress' are great."

"And 'The Cyberiad'?" He nodded enthusiastic agreement.

"Marvellous! If you stay in fantasy, you are not then pushed - in short units like ours, it's vitally important to think in terms of short units. You might take four units together and someone says, 'This is a good read!' But you come back quickly and say, 'Yes, good over an hour, but how do you break it down into 25 minutes? Is it a good read then?' Is it going to hold visually, over the 25 minutes? But science fiction in short units, you spend a lot of time re-defining things, because if you get very futuristic, what can you recognise? What will cars look like in the year 4,000? How will people travel? What will medical care be like? What will weapons be like? My guess is that they'll be so refined as to be utterly dreary! One can only record the consequences, rather than be interested in the weapons. In the fantastic, you can use the artifacts and methods of travel, clothes and humanoids and so on, then free-wheel in and out."

I thought of the stories involving earth history, and asked, "Any particular time period you would like to have been involved in?"

"I'd like to go back to the Wild West sometimes, but I'd dearly like to go back to meet real people and have arguments and discussions, these are very nice points and very difficult to decide on. I can make suggestions, but I don't have to take the responsibility. It would be very interesting for the Doctor to meet Izaak Walton and talk about fishing, or Isaac Newton and talk about gravity, and say, 'Look, kid, you've got it all wrong ' and demonstrate that he's wrong and that this is so far beyond Newton's experience that he has me thrown out by the servants! We are stymied by the cost of everything. These ideas that people throw around are very difficult to realise visually. So we settle for more traditional stuff."

"Do you find any relationship between Koura, the Magician, Rasputin, the Mystic and Dr.Who as an alien wizard?" He considered the question in silence for a moment.

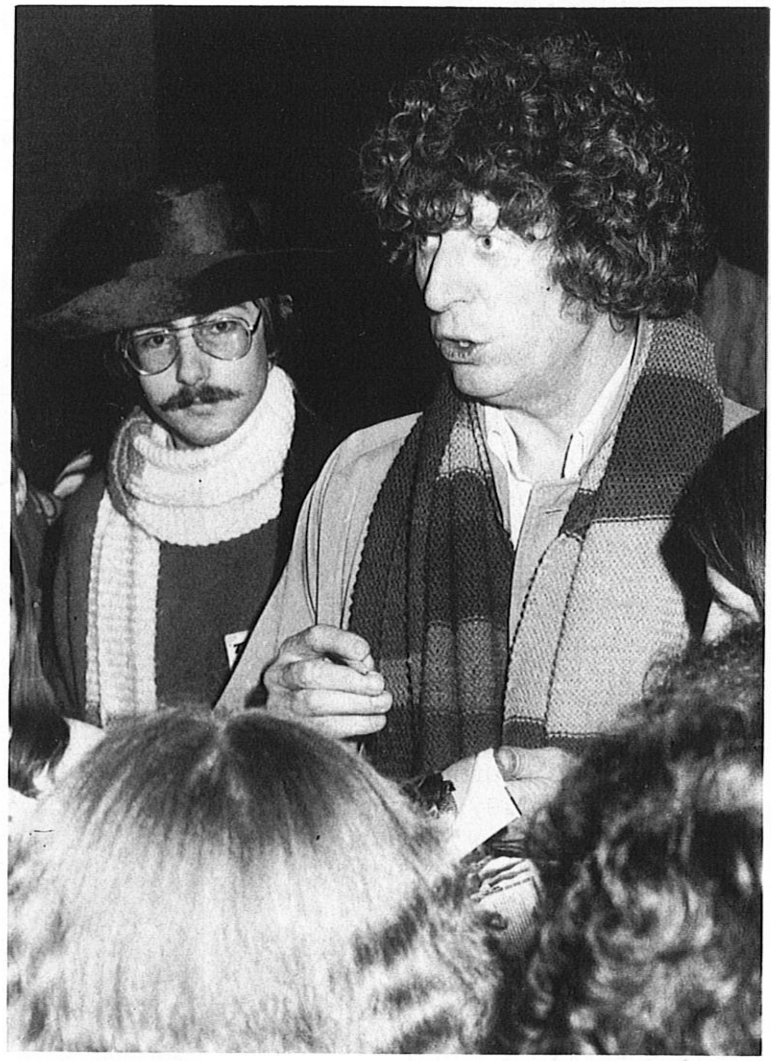
"Yes - it's a bit glib, but as an actor, filtering an emotion under the pressure of fictional time as opposed to real time - for an hour in the movies - they are compressed, the unities are not held on to. Yes, there would be one things that would link them. The tremendous gusto of these characters. They are acts of sheer energy and their convictions. There is a kind of life-force, when you come across perfectly outrageous people, who are totally convinced about what they do. I'm not now talking about criminals, in the area of psychosis. But Rasputin had such conviction that he was irresistable, he was a breath of fresh air and people said, 'At last we've met someone who is totally relaxed about his relationship with God, or his attitude to sex or money' - and totally simplistic in his politics. The fact that he was finally wrong doesn't alter his influence at that time. Something mesmeric or Messianic about him, as about people such as, in politics, Mr. Enoch Powell, who can really hold an audience with that amazing rhetoric, and simplify things, so that people can understand them. Koura, the wicked magician, he got his come-uppance at the end, but it's his energy that makes it interesting."

"Koura aged when he used magic and the Doctor has to regenerate, it seems a bit of coincidence." Are you in the least interested in magic or mysticism?"

"I don't think so. I'm interested from moment to moment with anything, like U.F.O.'s or mysticism. I just respond when things are happening to me."

"Do you see Doctor Who as today filling the place of fairy-tales, now superseded by television?"

"Well, yes, I suppose they are fairy-tales in the sense that they are morality tales, broadly. I've said this a thousand times, about Dr.Who, it doesn't admit a comparison with anything and that is a huge advantage. For example, it would be an advantage in a city the size of Sydney to have only one afternoon paper, which has clobbered all the potential readers - since then you've got no choice. To be nearly unique as Dr.Who is unique, is a wonderful advantage, a wonderful mixture of the heroic and the humorous. It's a great deal in my opinion. In a science fantasy like 'Star Wars', which was very funny and the machinery was interesting and that's what really made it, one of the young pilots had a slick American sense of humour. In Dr.Who all the emphases are on the characters, and certainly my character is successful and on television you cannot go into special effects, they have a diminishing return. You've got to found the interest of the audience and the emphases of the authors on the characters." He paused and flapped a hand at me imperiously. "When someone interesting is talking on the television, you listen to him - as when you go to a dinner because people are interesting. If someone is saying something compelling, you listen. It's no good making a cowardly retreat all the time into special effects, because audiences everywhere have seen the real thing, the inside of Cape Canaveral! Not the inside of some poxy little console with a few lights flashing! They've seen two thousand receivers with two thousand technicians biting their nails with real anxiety about two men in a capsule in outer space..." He gave a sharp laugh and said "I'll be very interested to see what 'BattleStar Galactica' is like."



ANTHONY HOWE WITH TOM BAKER IN SYDNEY

"Terrible!" was my instant reaction.

"I'm so glad you said that, because one of the notices I've got back from America said: 'I've been watching "BattleStar Galactica", that cost $10million for the first two episodes, and I was quite unimpressed. But the BBC put on a programme called 'Dr.Who', a sort of thyroid Harpo Marx tearing through it, and they did it for about fourpence - and it leaves the other for dead!'"

"What do you feel about Dr.Who being like Harpo Marx or Charlie Chaplin?"

He laughed, "I think that's an accident (because no one has any idea how large I am, and Harpo Marx was actually bald and wore a fright wig!), but suddenly some child said, "He's like Harpo Marx" and once that goes into your head it's irresistable, you can't get it out. But the real, flash 'trimmings' of acting, like eating sandwiches and drinking and smoking a cigarette as well, which is supposed to be naturalistic, I find insufferably tedious. Not because I don't like people talking with their mouths full, but cecause it's a device. And there are ways of phrasing lines in which you affect a spontaneity by perhaps struggling to remember the lines - those are the externals of acting. If the character and his motivation are in your head and you play that character from his point of view, as long as you are true to his point of view you can do anything, because there's an unswerving logic in it. If you are playing The Fool in 'Lear', it's no use trying to sound very moving; what you actually do is grip The Fool in your head, the Fool doesn't play the King - that's when you get confusion, when you have resonant, competent acting. It's an axiom of acting that people forget, you've got to stick with the point of view of the character, what would he do here, and then you do it, and if your conviction lines up with the text, it will work and the audience find it acceptable."

"What did you feel with the Sonic Screwdriver, and K-9 producing technological wizardry to solve the Doctor's problems?"

"The dog is a big asset because it amuses the audience. The Sonic Screwdriver is a terrible device, it's a kind of crutch the writers use. I get through the door with the screwdriver and on the other side the door closes and when I turn round the Sonic Screwdriver won't open it! That's when I turn to the camera with a Tom Baker line, 'Even the Sonic Screwdriver won't open this one...'"

The phone rang and Graham Bell looked at us looking at him with obvious displeasure. It was not quite the full hour, still five minutes to go. Quickly he asked the caller to phone back and Tom Baker gave me a conspiratorial wink. Hastily I handed him the biographical notes to check, with a couple of books to sign and an excellent portrait of him made for me by Andrew Szabo - which Tom Baker admired before he scrawled on the margin:

"FOR TONY, FROM TOM BAKER. 1ST FAN CLUB INTERVIEW IN SYDNEY, 1979"

Then he looked inquiringly at me and I asked, "Did you write the script with Michael Reeves for 'The Sorcerer'?" He shook his head firmly.

"No. That's a mistake in Halliwell's book." So much for reference works, I thought.

"What movies do you like?"

"I've got a very catholic taste in movies, I go to nearly all the popular movies because I need to know what's going on."

"What sort of music?" He looked up in surprise so I added, "No one ever seems to ask you that."

"No, they don't! Terribly traditional, mostly I listen to Beethoven, and Mozart string quartettes."

"How much of the present Dr.Who costume, and the jelly babies, the yo-yo, scarf and hat, was your choice?" He was busily reading through the list of notes, making alterations, and replied vaguely;

"The scarf was an accident, as you know, but all these things grew by accident, the jelly babies and yo-yo are often just desperation, we just put them in..."

As he spoke, the phone rang again, and Graham Bell muttered, "Time to wrap it up, now."

I said, "Thank you very much," and got a cheerful grin from Tom Baker. "There's piles of stuff I haven't asked yet, but still ..." Mr. Baker handed back my notes saying:

"Thanks, Tony, so sorry we're out of time, but there you are. You're welcome to another hour or half-hour some time, if we can fit it in. If you keep in touch - I know I'm flat out.."

Graham Bell said apologetically, "Tomorrow is the last day in Sydney and you're booked right through." The tall actor gave me a firm handshake, then turned to take the phone from Graham Bell.

"Let's shake your hand then, Tony. Goodbye!" He turned to take the phone from Graham Bell.

I grabbed books and papers and filled my briefase, took the recorder from the table and went over to the door, whispering my goodbyes to Graham Bell. Tom Baker's gaze followed me and he waved as I left the temporary TARDIS and headed for the rush-hour streets outside.

STOURBRIDGE TOWN HALL NEAR BIRMINGHAM

TACHYON '88

A TELEFANTASY EVENT FOR CHARITY
TAKING OVER WHERE 'LEISURE HIVE' LEFT OFF

5th & 6th November 1988

INVITED GUESTS INCLUDE:
Maurice Colbourne, Paul Darrow, Terence Dudley, Innes Lloyd, David Maloney, Philip Martin, Sylvester McCoy, Derek Meddings, David Rudkin, David Tomblin, Judi Trott, Joanne Whalley, Leonard White, Wanda Ventham + MORE !!

TV SCREENINGS FROM:
The Prisoner, Sky, The Avengers, The Saint, Supercar, Robin of Sherwood, Secret Service, UFO, Doomwatch, White Lady, DOCTOR WHO, Blakes 7, Thunderbirds, Department S + MORE !!

Booklet, badge, competitions, disco, exhibitions...

ALL OF THIS FOR THE MEAGRE AMOUNT OF £6 00 PER DAY (£2 00 reduction for stewards)

NAME .... ADDRESS ....

Registration fee £........... ....

ALL CHEQUES/POSTAL ORDERS must be made PAYABLE to TACHYON EVENTS (no cash)

Tick box for more information:

Fancy-dress competition	☐	**Accommodation**	☐
		Dealers table	☐
Mastermind	☐	**Auction**	☐

Sign here to be a steward: ....

Send all REGISTRATION FORMS to: Mark Shuttleworth, 70 Cross Street, Wall Heath,
KINGSWINFORD, West Midlands

Please enclose ONE self-addressed/stamped envelope

OFFICE USE ONLY

Receipt No: ....

Registration No: ....

Received by ....